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[THE BARRIER OF PRIDE.]

CLARICE VILLIERS; OR, WHAT LOVE FEARED.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE TOILS.

This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.

SHAKESPEARE.

ARICIA and Lord Redmond stood on the very verge of a precipice, yet neither knew of its close proximity. It was not possible that the child-woman should do so. What did Aricia know of risk or of evil? She was only conscious of a delicious dreamy content and happiness above anything which she had imagined possible upon earth. She had been taught, so far at least as Mrs. Dornton had taught her anything, that the world was filled with people wicked, cruel, and criminal. Was it possible, the girl asked herself, that this handsome stranger was any of these? She would have thrust the accusation from her with hot indignation. No; he must be all that was good and true and noble, and that being so, surely there must be in the world others like unto him in a lesser degree, and her mother must have maligned human nature.

Thus this untaught child had learned to doubt the only guide whom she had, and would adventure upon the perilous ocean of life without

pilot or compass. Lord Redmond's peril was not great, although his was not the sin of ignorance. He had simply permitted this sudden passion which had possessed him to blind him to the danger of the path of deceit upon which he had entered.

Under the shadowy branches stood a small rustic seat. As if by mutual consent the pair seated themselves upon it. The girl's liquid eyes scarcely held a gleam of that shyness which comes with the fruit of the tree of knowledge. She said but little, for her use of speech had been scanty. Save to her canine companions, she had never talked familiarly and freely; that was impossible alike with her mother and to the strange henchman of the Den.

And Redmond was scarcely a better conversationalist now. His will was good to address this girl in words of passionate endearment, even on their brief acquaintanceship, but he felt the absolute necessity of placing a strong restraint upon himself. What if unguarded speech should frighten away this wild bird never more to be reclaimed? She seemed frank and free as some animal upon which man had never intruded, and which may either come confidently to the first caressing hand or start away in wild alarm and refuse to yield itself to the tamer.

But this reserve soon became less on either side. To a man of the world like Lord Redmond opportunities could not fail to offer themselves which afforded a common ground for the fastidious patrician and the untaught recluse, especially when love led the way, and it was not long before Aricia felt as if she had known the stranger for long years.

It was especially towards gaining opportunities for further intercourse that the young man

addressed his efforts. However blissful this meeting, it would be deprived of its felicity if it were not the harbinger of others. Therefore, in guarded phrases, Everard tried to learn what was possible both respecting Aricia and her parent.

The girl could tell him but little, for there was but little in the monotony of the life she led to tell. Of the shadowy remembrances of a happy childhood Aricia made no mention. They did not seem real enough to be worth the words, even if words could have conveyed them.

But although Lord Redmond could not learn much of Aricia's antecedents, yet every sentence the girl uttered served to increase the young man's dangerous interest in her. In every admission of the misery of her life there mingled so much of charming naivete, of unconscious frankness, of tender love for the stern parent who had never striven to merit or call forth such feeling, and the girl's free speech mirrored a character so artless, so loving, above all, so utterly unlike anything which Lord Redmond had met, that it is little wonder he fell under the spell.

Time flew rapidly until at last the circling shadow of the gnomon of the antique sundial, which stood hard by their retreat, awoke Aricia to the fact that if Lord Redmond prolonged his stay, Lamourne would return, and they would be exposed to the peril of discovery.

It was only at her earnest solicitation and her promise to meet him at a little grove hard by, known to both, that he at last reluctantly quitted the grounds of the Folly. Already each had made great steps in a path of danger, for as Lord Redmond said his parting words, Aricia's hand was clasped in his with a pressure

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which none but lovers give or receive, his arm embraced her willowy form with the gesture which claims a lover's possession, and such caresses as he pressed upon Aricia's pure, low brow should be reserved for the beloved one only.

It could scarcely have been with feelings of satisfaction that Lord Redmond discerned, before he had ridden many furlongs, the carriage of the Villiers, with its handsome pair of bays, coming down a hill in close proximity.

It would never do that he should be found so near the Folly. Clarice's suspicions would be assuredly rekindled. Quick as thought Everard put his horse at the high, whitethorn hedge which bordered the road, and galloping for a close clump of trees on the other side of the field, succeeded in escaping detection by the occupants of the carriage, who, he did not doubt, were Mrs. Villiers and Clarice.

When they had passed he rode gently back to the hedge and peered cautiously over it. To his intense surprise the carriage had pulled up at the dilapidated gate which led to the long chase separating the Folly from the public road.

This chase, Lord Redmond knew, led only to the abode of Mrs. Dornton. Were Mrs. Villiers and Clarice, then, going to visit the eccentric and morose old woman? and if so, was it in consequence of his own expressed wish?

He was not left long in doubt. The footman descended, and with some difficulty opened the rickety barrier. Then the carriage bowled on over the rough, grass-grown gravel, and presently the listener could hear the sharp yapping of Gyp and the thunderous and savage roar of Fiend.

Everard waited with some anxiety for the re-appearance of the equipage. How would Aricia behave? he thought. Would she speak of an intruder who called himself Everard—for he had told the girl his Christian name, suppressing, however, his patronymic and title? That he was called Everard, and that the name sounded sweet because it was his, was all-sufficient for Aricia.

Then again Lord Redmond thought of Aricia's silken robe and the necklace of big pearls with much misgiving. It did not need. When at the dinner-table at the Manor that evening the events of the day were related or discussed, Mrs. Villiers and Clarice were full of their exploit in venturing upon the den of the recluse, and unanimous as to the beauty and the charming rusticity, as they termed it, of the daughter, lamenting, meanwhile, that she should be so unbefittingly dressed.

Lord Redmond was reassured. It was clear that Aricia had resumed the smock-frock in the short interval between his own departure and the arrival of Mrs. Villiers and Clarice. It was not less palpable that Aricia had kept her own counsel about her visitor, and that the girl had achieved a highly favourable impression on the minds both of Mrs. Villiers and her daughter. So far well; yet somehow Lord Redmond hoped in his heart of heart that the visit would not be repeated.

CHAPTER IX.

A FLING FOR FORTUNE.

There is a tide in the affairs of men
That takes at the flood leads on to fortune.

SHAKESPEARE.

BASIL OLYFAUNT'S absence from Tremawr Manor was protracted for a day beyond the term which he had solicited, very considerably to Mr. Villiers's annoyance.

That fussy but good-natured gentleman did not spare his reproaches when the secretary put in an appearance upon the evening of the second day after leaving the Manor. Basil, however, received his patron's scolding with commendable equanimity and profuse apologies. He excused the delay with sufficient plausibility on the ground of some details of business with his relatives having consumed more time than he had expected.

During the next few days the young man appeared to be desirous of atoning for his remissness in the matter of his absence by intense application to his employer's political interest in the canvas.

Mr. Villiers was easily satisfied by this show of energy and devotion. But had he been a closer observer of men, he would infallibly have detected that it was, to a very considerable degree superficial and simulated. With all his bustle and demonstrative assiduity Basil's thin face wore at times a curious distract expression, and a look of abstraction would come into his dark eyes even while engrossed to the utmost in his ostensible duties.

Although, since the secretary's accusation of her lover Clarice had avoided him to an extent almost marked, she had not failed, with feminine acuteness, to notice that which was quite beyond her father's ken—the pre-occupation of the young man's mind.

The fact troubled her, she knew not why. What was Basil Olyfaunt to her that she should mark his moods or take note of aught that concerned him? She asked herself the question with a little self-anger, but no satisfactory reply was forthcoming. Perhaps, had she dared to answer as her head would have spoken she would have told herself that she—the proud daughter of an ancient house—had a certain undefined but very real dread of her father's humble dependent.

Somehow, too, she felt that Basil had gained a distinct, though certainly not palpable power over her. If she had been told that it was possible for such an one as he to sow doubt in her heart, to make her view many of her lover's actions with a suspicion painful, nay, almost intolerable at times, Clarice would have laughed the assertion to scorn.

Yet she felt that he had done this thing, and in so doing he had succeeded in embittering her life. Coldly calm as she always showed herself to Basil, her spirit was hot and indignant against him that he should have the daring presumption to attempt this. Nor was her humiliation less to own herself so weak as to succumb to the ignoble feeling of jealousy.

Basil truly had never attempted to reopen the subject; but this fact afforded Clarice but little consolation. Indeed, she would rather have chosen that he should have so done, for then she could have overwhelmed him with scornful reproaches on his unmanliness and treachery.

Clarice felt that had the secretary persisted in his charges against Lord Redmond she could have treated him and considered him as a mere idle tale-bearer akin to the feminine scandal-mongers whom she had met in circles far above the secretary's position.

But as it was she could not think of Basil so lightly, for had he not by one sole charge against Everard, neither repeated nor substantiated, sowed in her mind poison seeds which did not even need his future tending, but grew and flourished in spite of her attempts to root them up and overshadowed her happiness with their baleful luxuriance.

Thus Clarice viewed Basil's unusual demeanour with apprehension. If he was plotting, against what could it be but her peace of mind and her love? And was he not one whose machinations were deep and deadly?

The sight which Miss Villiers had had of Aricia did not tend to alleviate her fears. It is seldom that a woman can forgive another woman for being beautiful, if there is the remotest chance that those charms may be brought to bear upon the heart that she loves. Clarice acknowledges to herself that Aricia was indeed very lovely—the most lovely woman, she thought, whom she had ever met—except—And Miss Villiers turned to her mirror and did not finish the sentence.

One comfort—and a great one—she had. Lord Redmond was particularly attentive to her. Since the time of her visit to the Folly he had been most constant in his attendance, most tender in his duties of affianced lover, and when he was by her side, Clarice would shake off the doubts and fears that haunted her, and tell her

self that they were only the creations of her own brain.

"H'm, h'm! Most imposing-looking letter for you this morning, Olyfaunt," said Mr. Villiers one day as he unlocked the letter-bag which the groom had just brought over from Tremawr, and handed the missive over to his secretary with a smile.

The young man took the large blue envelope with a hand which trembled a little. But he commanded himself instantly, and opened the epistle with the utmost deliberation, and as deliberately perused its contents, carefully placing the letter in the breast pocket of his morning coat when he had done so.

Mr. Villiers was intent on some communication from an electioneering agent, and his spouse equally so in a letter from a lady friend, and neither paid any attention to Basil's movements. But Clarice, who was unoccupied, had not failed to notice that as the young man read a bright red spot rose and burned in the centre of each pallid cheek.

He raised his eyes so suddenly as he concluded that he caught Clarice's gaze fixed upon him. The girl turned her face aside in genuine annoyance both at being detected in an act of espionage which might seem unworthy of her, and because in the curious mingling of expressions in Olyfaunt's look triumph seems to predominate.

That afternoon, while Basil was with his patron at Tremawr on the former's canvassing operations, the secretary managed to detach himself from Mr. Villiers.

Having done so, he rapidly traversed some of the narrow and ill-paved thoroughfares of the ancient borough until he reached a quiet little inn surrounded by a very odour of respectability in Church Street.

"Is Mr. Percival here?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; oh, yes, sir," replied a waiter. "P'raps you're the gent as he's expecting."

Basil gave his name.

"All right, sir. You're the party. Walk this way, sir." And he led the way to a small private room.

Ushering Basil in, the waiter stood attentive to any orders which might be given. The snug little parlour, with its wall decorated with highly coloured prints of Derby and St. Leger winners, was occupied already by a single individual, the mysterious advertiser. He rose from his chair and shook the young man heartily by the hand.

"You are punctual," he observed drawing an old-fashioned but valuable gold watch from his fob. "An excellent virtue in a young man."

Basil laughed.

"I am host here. What can I offer you? The cellars of the Duke's Head—happy omen in the name!—are good. I've already made acquaintance with them."

Olyfaunt expressed his entire indifference on the point.

"Just like you young men, you gilded youth, you neither care for nor can appreciate a generous vintage. We seniors know better. Wine, judiciously used, gives us new life—strengthens the heart and cheers the brain. Cobwebs may gather round the receptacle which holds it, but it clears them from our heads. I'll judge for you. Waiter, another bottle of the lilac seal."

"Yes, sir, certingly, sir."

While the man had gone for the wine Mr. Percival handed over a plethoric cigar-case to his companion.

"You find them the primest Cabanas you ever smoked. Import them myself. I'll give you a wrinkle—always carry your own cigars. Good wine may perhaps be got at a country inn—good cigars never."

The waiter returned with the wine, then left the room.

"Now to business. I received your packet."

"Well?"

"Yes, it is well—very well indeed," and he rubbed his hand together and smiled pleasantly.

"Can it be done?"

"Unquestionably. Everything can be made as clear as possible."

"And you have no doubt as to the result?"
"None whatever. Neither have I much doubt about you, which is the main thing. You comprehend?"

"I think so."

"Let us be frank. Of course you are sufficiently a man of the world to be aware that I shall receive some recompense—mind I say 'some'—from a certain quarter."

"So I should presume."

"But you can also understand that I expect more than this."

"Ah!"

"Of course. And my reward must be ample. Read this."

He handed a folio of brief paper, closely written, to the young man. Basil read it slowly and carefully. Some portions he perused more than once and appeared to be weighing mentally.

"Is it satisfactory?"

"I don't know. The terms are stringent."

"Man alive! you don't expect such a position for nothing, do you. 'Ex nihil nihil fit,' as we used to say in the Latin grammar. Did I not discover you?"

"True—but—"

"But me no buts. I am the main spring in the affair. Without me you would never have been found. Without me too you can even now do nothing."

Basil looked at the speaker with a curious expression.

"I can read your thoughts, my lad; but it won't do. It occurs to you that you will rummage the 'Peerage' eh?"

"Perhaps so."

"Useless, my dear sir, perfectly useless. Now see here! I'm a business man, and can't afford to waste time. Do you agree—yes or no?"

Again the young man hesitated.

"I suppose I must," he said at last.

"Suppose you must" and a deuced lucky dog to have the chance, I should say."

He touched the bell.

"Send my man in!" he said to the waiter.

In a few seconds a tall attenuated individual, dressed in seedy black, entered the room. Mr. Percival drew from a small travelling bag a folded parchment, which he opened and passed to Basil.

"Read it," he said, "then sign it here."

Basil perused the document with the same attention that he had given to the paper. Then with equal deliberation he affixed his signature at the specified place.

"Sign as witness, Quillet," said Mr. Percival.

The tall man took the pen and did as he was directed.

"That will do. Oh, here, have a glass of wine, Quillet."

The attenuated one seized the glass, and straightening his long anatomy pouzed its contents down his throat as if he were emptying the liquid down a funnel. Then his watery grey eyes wandered lovingly to the bottle.

"That will do, Quillet," said Mr. Percival, sternly.

The man started, his head sank upon his breast, his body seemed to suffer collapse, and he shambled out of the room.

"Now for details," said Mr. Percival. "How long can you stay?"

"I had better speedily rejoin Mr. Villiers."

"By all means. Villiers! Ah, yes. Has a pretty daughter, hasn't he?"

The red spot rose to Basil's cheek. The elder man evidently detected it.

"Tut! tut! That won't do, you know. Must look higher—much higher."

"Sir—Mr. Percival, I beg—"

"Oh, of course! I understand; but she won't do. But that's a matter of detail, you know. Now listen to me, and I'll tell you everything in a nutshell."

"Wouldn't it be better to write it down and send—"

Mr. Percival looked at Basil keenly.

"No, it wouldn't," he replied harshly, "and you very well know that it wouldn't. I can tell you all in a quarter of an hour."

Mr. Percival was as good as his word. Within the specified time Basil was seeking Mr. Villiers, with a lighter step and a lighter heart than he had ever known before.

CHAPTER X.

TRUMP CARDS.

He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who will not put it to the touch
To win or lose it all. LOVRIECE.

On the afternoon of the second day after Basil Olyfaunt's interview with Mr. Percival at the "Duke's Head" at Tremawr, Lord Redmond making some plausible excuse to Clarice, proceeded to the stables, and directing his horse to be saddled rode off in the direction of Tremawr.

He had no sooner got out of sight of the Manor, however, than his horse's head was turned towards Dornton Folly, and he was soon trotting rapidly in the nearest course to the little spinney where he had appointed to meet Aricia.

He had not long left the Manor when Mr. Villiers and Basil entered the room where Clarice was seated, idly turning over the leaves of the last book of sensational travels out. A few minutes afterwards the elder man strolled off to the library, leaving his daughter and Basil.

The prospect of anything like a tête-à-tête was by no means a pleasant one to the former. But on the other hand flight from the foe neither suited the temper nor the tactics of Clarice. She simply resumed the volume which she had laid down on her father's entrance and affected to be absorbed in its pages. It was a dangerous ruse and one of which she presently repented.

Basil, on his part, did not conceal that he wished to open a conversation. He toyed with the mother-o'-pearl paper knife, he rose and crossed the room as if to inspect some magnificent caladiums in the jardinière, and failing to attract Clarice's attention, at last resumed his seat, and said in a voice more carefully modulated than usual:

"Miss Villiers, I wish to ask you a question." Clarice laid down the book and leaning back, nodded languidly.

"Will you take fright at it?"

"Why should I? At least, if it is any question which our relations justify you in putting?"

There could be no mistake about either the hauteur of Miss Villiers' tone, or the delicate but marked emphasis placed upon the suggestive phrase, "our relations." It was as if she had said: "Not if you remember that I am Miss Villiers, your master's daughter, and that you are Mr. Olyfaunt, his poor dependent."

"The question is purely a hypothetical one—yet one of great importance to me. Perhaps also without interest to you."

Clarice looked up with a gaze of some inquiry. She detected in Basil's tone a more assured ring than it usually took when he addressed her.

"Proceed, Mr. Olyfaunt. I will do my best to answer."

"Do you think if a woman is heart-free—or is not bound by an engagement—and a suitor for her hand presents himself, having the good wishes of her parents, she should endeavour to make him and them happy by accepting him?"

She fluttered the feather fan which hung from her waist for a few moments before she replied, indifferently:

"Really, I am not good at such problems. I would refer you to one of the old books in the library. When ladies and troubadours held their courts of love, I fancy they used to make laws about such points."

"But I want your opinion."

"I suppose, then, that most women would at least try to consider favourably the claims of such a parti."

"I am glad to hear you say so. Let me put

a case. Suppose you were the lady, and the pretender—I?"

Clarice's beautiful lips curled scornfully as she responded:

"You are treading upon very dangerous ground, Mr. Olyfaunt. I should be sorry—very sorry to do you harm. But it is my turn to ask you a question."

Basil inclined his head.

"Suppose I were to tell Mr. Villiers that his secretary asked his daughter questions whose insolent audacity was not even veiled by a gentlemanly tact. Suppose—"

"Miss Villiers?"

"Stay, sir! This is your second offence, remember, unwarrantable and audacious as the first." She rose to her feet and drew herself up proudly. "Suppose, farther, that I were to tell Mr. Villiers that his secretary, not content with such insolent persecution, had chosen to malign a noble gentleman, and striven to sow dissension between an affianced couple."

Again Basil tried to interrupt her, but she waved him off.

"What do you think would be Mr. Basil Olyfaunt's fate at Tremawr Manor? I can tell you. He would, before an hour had elapsed, receive his salary for a year in advance and would be shown from my father's door."

Basil writhed at the bitter sarcasm, but answered, with assumed calm:

"You are right. Such would be the fate of Basil Olyfaunt, the secretary, without doubt. But such will not be mine."

"What insanity possesses you?"

"That which I have put as an hypothesis may become a truth—a fact, and speedily, and then I would beg of you to remember your own words—I would entreat only that you let time work for me, to soften your heart towards one whose only thoughts are of you. For the 'noble gentleman' time has also much to do."

"Do not speak of him!" cried Clarice, her eyes blazing with indignant light. "No word of him again—no more base slanders, or I invoke my father's protection against you. I will be merciful and not call upon Lord Redmond for your chastisement."

A sneer passed over Basil's lips.

"I do not fear his lordship," he replied. "Nor do I bear him hatred or ill-will. Far from it. No one can be more ready to do justice to his good qualities, which are many—amongst them, however, constancy cannot be reckoned."

Without deigning Basil another word or look, Clarice swept haughtily to the door as this last insult met her ear. Basil stepped forward as if to open it for her.

"One moment only, Miss Villiers," he said. "It is my highest and dearest hope that you will forgive me. To-day I am aware that you view me as one who is the victim of his own presumption. You think me little less than mad to speak as I have spoken. So be it. Tomorrow will bring about much of that which I have spoken of. Time must do the rest."

He held the door open, and Clarice passed out, without another word. The girl went on to her own apartments until the dinner gong should sound. There while she laved her flushed face and strove to conquer her hot indignation at Basil Olyfaunt, two questions persisted in presenting themselves.

"Is he mad? Shall I tell papa of this?" And to neither could Clarice return an answer.

Meanwhile Lord Redmond had found his way to the little wood which was known in the neighbourhood as Tyrrel's Spinney. Riding down the cart road which traversed it, he had hitched his horse to a tree stump, and made his way through the bushes to the spot appointed for the meeting. He was not disappointed. Aricia awaited him—Aricia, not in soft attire as at their last meeting, but again in the rude garb of the peasant girl, which served to cloak but could not conceal her surpassing loveliness.

She had much to tell her lover, for she could talk freely now of the ways of life in the strange home. Her face was sad and her manner trou-

bled, for, she said, it might be impossible again to elude the vigilance of her mother, whose suspicions appeared to have been aroused by the visit of Mrs. Villiers. At least much time would elapse before Aricia would again dare to make the experiment, and even on that day she had done so in fear and foreboding, for not only did she dread her mother's acuteness, but she fancied the dwarf had also become suspicious, and might act the part of a spy.

"Why should that blue-eyed lady with the golden hair come to our home, Everard?" Aricia queried. "Mother says that it must be because I spoke to you that day when your big dog was going to swallow poor Gyp. And now she will hardly let me leave her sight for an hour."

"I fear Mrs. Dornton is right, my darling," replied Lord Redmond.

"Oh, you did not tell her to come, Everard?" said the girl, in a reproachful tone.

"Yes. And why should I not have done so, Aricia? It was my fear for you which impelled me."

"Foolish Everard, what did you fear for me?"

"Had you not promised that I should see you again, dearest? When day after day I passed the garden of the Folly and you were never there I became alarmed, for you will forgive my words, I dreaded your mother's violence towards you."

Aricia flushed little indignantly.

"You must not say such things of her, Everard, nor I listen to them."

"Pardon me!"

"Yes; but those people must come no more. It would madden my mother and is very bitter to me."

"To you, Aricia! Why should that be?"

An expression half-sad, half-scornful passed, over the girl's face.

"I cannot bear that they should see me—they in their pretty dresses, and with their smooth hair and gloved hands, and I—thus—I do not know how it is, but, I do not feel either fear or shame that you should see me—"

The young man stopped the word by a caress and whispered:

"This is because I love you, my darling, and you know it."

Aricia blushed rosily. They were very happy in the fleeting moments which passed all too rapidly. Whenever did lovers look on the future save hopefully? It seems to the ardent heart that love must conquer in the world's battle, and as conqueror obtain his crown. If the pair had seen, low down among the bushes, a pair of lurid, bloodshot eyes, which followed their every movement and took note of their every caress, their happiness would have suffered much alloy.

Late in the afternoon Lord Redmond's horse returned alone to Tremawr Manor. It bore no evidence of having been ridden hard, nor any soil of earth to indicate that it had fallen; nor were saddle, stirrups or stirrup leathers, bridle, reins, or martingale broken or disarranged. The reins had in fact been knotted together over the animal's neck.

But the steed's arrival, news of which reached Clarice speedily, brought a sick terror to the girl's heart, which the assurances of her father failed to assuage. Messengers were at once dispatched in different directions whence Mr. Villiers thought intelligence of the missing one might be gained, but all returned alike unsuccessful. It was with sad forebodings that, late at night, Clarice sought her sleepless pillow.

Was it some strange sympathy that kept another woman not less restless and wakeful during the night watches? No dumb messenger of ill had come to Aricia Dornton, yet in her meagre little chamber, as the shadows of even came on, the girl sat trembling, she knew not why.

Some premonition of evil had seized her soul with an icy hand; some warning that peril had overtaken, or was closing around the man she loved. She walked the narrow chamber with

perturbed steps, her hands clasped, her eyes filled with an anxious fear.

When the shadows had fully come, and the bats flitted across the dusk, and from the old barn the great white owl hooted dolefully, it seemed to Aricia's excited fancy that at uncertain intervals a strange, weird cry wailed out under the shining stars across corn-land and pasture, holt and glebe.

The girl had no superstitious fears, and knew naught of legend of ghost or sheeted spectre, or warning tones borne from the dead to the living world of men, but as her ear seemed to drink in that cry with a shuddering dread her blood ran thick and her breath came short and labouringly. In her experience no such sound, whether a real reverberation of the encircling air, or a brain-coining of the excited mind, had ever occurred.

"It is my fancy!" she murmured. "What a coward I have grown!"

But when she leaned out of the little casement and heard again that strange cry mingle with the hoot of the owl, she shrank back, and covering her face with her hands, gasped:

"It is his voice!—it is his voice!"

(To be Continued.)

WILL YOU LOVE ME WHEN I'M OLD?

I HAVE heard your guileless praising
Of my glossy raven curls,
Of my eyes that vie with diamonds,
Of my teeth, like gleaming pearls;
But there's something you're forgetting.

Which were better to be told,
Which may silence all regretting,
Will you love me when I'm old?

I may vie with summer roses
In your fond and partial eyes,
But remember summer posies
Fade when autumn sweeps the skies!
And when winter's hand has touched me,

With its frost and chilling cold,
Will you cling to me in spirit?
Will you love me when I'm old?

I have often heard you praise me,
Praise the beauty of my face,
But the beauty of my spirit—
Has it left no lasting trace?
Ah, my darling, Beauty's fading—

Fleeting ere it scarce unfold,
'Twill not last through dreary autumn,
It will fade me when I'm old.

Ask this question calmly, darling,
Do not cheat your heart nor mine;
Do not waste your life's sweet incense,
Burning it on beauty's shrine.
If it is not inward grace that charmed you

If 'tis but earth's coarser mold,
Oh, release me, ere I've harmed you.
Don't deceive me when I'm old.

'Tis a woman's heart that questions,
All I prize on earth's at stake;
If you do not truly love me
Free me ere my heart doth break.
Ah, I see your loving glances,
And your answer's best untold;
I can trust my future safely,
For our hearts will ne'er grow old.

SCIENCE.

SIMPLE TREATMENT FOR SCIATICA.

DR. EBBAUD, of Nimes, states that he has for many years treated all his cases of sciatica and neuralgic pains with an improvised electric apparatus, consisting merely of a flatiron and vinegar, two things that will be found in every

house. The iron is heated until sufficiently hot to vaporise to vinegar, and is then covered with some woollen fabric, which is moistened with vinegar, and the apparatus is applied at once to the painful spot. The application may be repeated two or three times a day. As a rule, the pain disappears in twenty-four hours, and recovery ensues at once.

COLOUR BLINDNESS.

THAT the prevalence of colour blindness among railway employees, and the consequent danger, were not overrated by us in our early articles on this subject, continues to receive abundant confirmation. Dr. Keyser has examined the eyes of the train hands of three railways, and finds that three and one half per cent. are colour blind. These cannot discern the difference between colours; and in addition there are eight and one half per cent. who can distinguish colours, but cannot distinguish shades of the same colour apart. There are thus twelve per cent. who have not that quickness and accuracy of perception of colours which should be considered absolutely necessary in the railway service, as long as signalling is done by means of coloured lights. It is fair to presume that general investigation would show about the same results.

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

It is satisfactory to find that the "Needle" has been successfully coated with an indurating solution which it is hoped will protect it for many years from the action of the sulphurous acid that the seacoal fires of the metropolis disgorge into the atmosphere to the detriment of most descriptions of stone. The monolith had been greatly injured on the surface from exposure to atmospheric influence in Egypt, especially since it was thrown down; and it also, owing to the disorganized condition of its exterior, receiving further injury during its transit to this country. The effect of the silicious wash, we are told, has surpassed expectation, and is only to be compared to the restoration of an oil painting. The obelisk first received a thorough cleaning, it was then coated with the solution, and now appears as if just chiseled from the rock, showing its original colours, the quartz and feldspar glittering in the sunlight. The intaglio also comes out much more distinctly than before.

BEAUTIFUL BLACK COLOUR FOR BRONZE.—A strong concentrated thin solution of nitrate of silver is required for this purpose. It should be mixed with an equal solution of nitrate of copper, and well shaken together. The pieces which require colouring are dipped into this solution and left for a short time. When taken out, they should be equally heated till the required black colour makes its appearance.

GILDING ON STEEL.—An old process—which, however, is by no means universally known—is as follows: By shaking a solution of gold leaf in aqua regia with ether, or naphtha, the gold will leave the acids to combine with the other liquid. Polished steel surfaces, such as knives, scissors, &c., on being plunged in this solution, when dry, become covered with a coat of gold, which is an excellent preservative from rust. Letters, designs, &c., may be traced by means of a pen, pointed stick, or brush, and as the ether evaporates the gold will remain fixed.

It is stated that a number of lady art students at South Kensington have signified their intention of adopting trousers (à la Mlle. Bernhardt) during the hours of their artistic labour. This statement is put forward as a fact, but it is one of those things which require to be seen to be believed. The new articles of attire are to be called "Bernhardtettes," in honour of their original wearer; but the short coat to go with them, it would appear, has yet to be named.



[REUNITED.]

THE
MYSTERY OF HIS LOVE;
OR,
WHO MARRIED THEM?

By the Author of "Christine's Revenge; or,
O'Hara's Wife."

CHAPTER XXV.

CHARLES HALIFAX.

I have thought of thee long
Through the winter's night,
While sad winds sung their song
Till the morning light:

LILIAS hastily put on her shoes and the coarse, ugly dress of the institution, and then redoubled her frantic efforts to make herself heard. The smell of burning increased; the cries of terror redoubled, and drowned her own in their uproar.

She was just abandoning herself to despair—she had just made up her mind to lie down in her narrow bed and die—when suddenly her door burst open. For a moment she was driven back, half stifled by the smoke which filled the passage and the staircase. But then a window, somewhere in the rear, was driven in and water came splashing into the passage.

The engines were at work; the noise and clamour of outside voices reached her where she stood. The engines were there playing against that wing of the house. Soon, she supposed, all danger would be over, and she might escape. Might she? She did not know who had unfastened the door of her room. She never did know that, and probably never will as long as she lives.

She hesitated. The stone staircase was dim and indistinct in the grey, faint light of dawn which came in at the windows near the roof. Perhaps she would meet somebody if she went down—somebody who would seize her roughly by the arm and drag her back to her cell.

She made up her mind in a couple of minutes that the attempt must be made—that even if it failed, the chance was worth the risk. Another moment, and she was rushing swiftly down the stone stairs. The atmosphere was still thick and oppressive; but she managed, though feeling faint and giddy, to reach the entrance-hall. The hall-door was open to the night. She saw a crowd surging on the wide carriage drive with that back-ground of dark shrubs planted on the great plot or bed in front of St. Mary's.

In the hall were several figures moving hastily to and fro. What were they all doing? Probably these people had brought whatever was at all valuable belonging to the matron and superintendents of the establishment, and now they hesitated whether to trust the incroaching crowd or the possibly returning flames.

Voices—and angry voices as well as alarmed ones—were in the hall and passages. Everybody seemed alarmed and afraid. It was again a moment of indecision for Lilius. She wore the white cap and grey dress of the institution.

Among the rough, cruel crowd outside—and you must pardon Lilius if her experiences of human nature were so sad and so stern as to make her suppose that every other man or woman in a human crowd would be cruel)—among the rough crowd outside, many would have the cunning shrewdness to guess that she was one of the supposed dishonest young persons of the institution trying to escape the discipline necessary for her reformation, and she would most likely be caught and dragged back again to the house which was a prison in miniature.

She was wise enough now to walk as slowly and leisurely through the crowd in the hall as she could, assuming the manner of somebody who is sent on a message. And thus, though a

few excited women vaguely asked themselves what brought one of the reformatory children there, not a single individual of the household interfered with Lilius, and she passed into the crowd and into the garden unchallenged, passed through that crowd also unchallenged, and so soon found herself in the avenue leading from the house to the lodge-gates.

"Now they will be open surely," she said to herself, "for the fire engines are up at the west wing, and they will have left the gates open."

The result was exactly what the poor child deserved. The gates were wide open. The lodge-keeper and his wife, considering themselves safe from the fire, being old folks and fond of their rest, had retired to their warm bed, leaving the gates wide open for the engines to pass through when their work was done. And Lilius passed out into the lane a free girl. She ran on now for some time at the top of her speed, taking the same direction she well remembered that cab had traversed which had brought her to St. Mary's; that is to say, she turned to the left on leaving her prison gates, and ran until she reached the main road.

By that time the grey spring dawn had spread her wings over the yet silent world. Houses, trees, hedges, posts, stood out weirdly in the breaking light; the breeze sprang up chill, but fresh Lilius went and leaned upon a five-barred gate which led into a track of meadows; but her face was turned citywards.

There she had left all she loved and cared for in this great cold world. There were her father and brother. And then she thought of Mr. Holdsworth, the great painter, and of his kindness; and she asked herself what he must think of her disappearance.

"Anything wrong, I wonder?" she asked herself. "I have been accused of so much that is false and so punished for what I have never done that it makes me afraid almost to think of what may be said next. That Lady Overbury is a great person. She is rich. Whatever she says seems to be believed. I am afraid that she has told some terrible things to Mr. Holdsworth

and the earl about me. I wonder if they will believe her?"

It will be noticed that Lilius said Mr. Holdsworth and the earl. The painter stood first in her regard as the better and wiser man, though she had a liking for the great earl likewise.

"My poor father and Charlie," she said to herself, "what has become of them while I have been away? The money I left has been spent, of course. They may have been turned into the streets—they may be dead!"

She felt so sad and world-weary, this girl of sixteen, that she had hardly the energy left to weep. She was like the mother of the first Napoleon who, when she was told of the death of her grandson, exclaimed:

"I have no more tears left!"

"They are perhaps dead!" said Lilius, wearily, "and those who were my friends will blame me for my absence, I daresay. I, too, shall die before long. I almost wish the time was come now. I am too weak and too ignorant and too young to battle with this cruel world."

She had no tears left, this innocent girl of sixteen, but the grey morning came on now from her eastern chambers weeping chill drops as of some heavy grief. Lilius had neither cloak nor hat; soon she was wetted almost to the skin. She arose and turned her pale young face towards the giant city.

The world awoke as the girl passed on through the pitiless rain of our English spring. She met milkwomen and postmen and carts and traps, and then she reached St. John's Wood. On, on, on she walked, and the rain increased, and she was footsore and faint and ready to drop by the wayside, still she had an instinct which led her on.

She was impatient to find her adopted father and little brother, and thus she passed on into the great thoroughfares, and at length, about eleven o'clock in the day, she reached Newport Market and the shop of Mrs. Finch. She entered and was distracted to find a stranger serving Dorset butter and red herrings in the shop.

"Mrs. Finch," she began.

The stranger was a little, fierce-looking woman, with very black eyes, brisk, and busy and active. She was of middle age, and if poor Lilius had read Pickwick, which she had not, she might have found some likeness between the new proprietress of the establishment and a certain uncompromising landlady of two medical students who figure in that imitable book.

"Mrs. Finch," Lilius repeated, humbly, "where is she?"

"Don't ask me no questions about no Finches," cried the fierce little woman, savagely. "I don't make myself an object drinking spirits, I hope, and neglect my business. I never touch anything stronger than a good cup of tea, I hope; as for the person you ask about, she could not pay her way, and this place would have been cleared out if my brother-in-law hadn't bought it in for me and placed me here a respectable widow, I hope, and I should be very glad if you mean to contradict me, if you will do so at once."

Mrs. Skimpton—that was the inharmonious name of the lady who sold Dorset and red herrings—folded her arms defiantly, and pursed up her lips and darted the most malicious looks at the slight drenched form of the young girl.

"Oh, madame, I knew nothing, but I want to know if my father, Mr. Martin—"

"Hey!" interrupted Mrs. Skimpton in the shrillest voice of a shrill virago, "those beggars went out long ago. Did you think I was going to keep them? I turned them out one fine afternoon, I can tell you, and all the lot of low wretches that woman had in the house!"

"Jack," cried poor Lilius, bursting into tears—"is he gone too?"

"Ay, he is, I can tell you," retorted the self-righteous virago with a cruel sneer; "and where they are gone I can't tell you, and I wouldn't if I could, for I hate all such beggarly creatures as haven't got a decent meal to put

into their mouths, nor a decent coat to their backs. I want the rooms for those as can pay. I can furnish them comfortably, I hope, and my daughter and me knows how to wait on a respectable young man as pays a pound a week regular for the two rooms—a young man who asks no impudent questions about his coals nor his cold meat, that's the kind of lodgers I like, young woman. And now you needn't stand staring there unless you have money to pay for what you want. If you belong to the Finch lot and her lodgers, I don't suppose you can."

Something like spirit awoke in the breast of Lilius; a great flash shot out of her large dark eyes.

"I do not know what I have done to make you speak to me in that cruel manner," she began.

But alas! for Lilius, words or just indignation are indeed thrown away upon a virago of the Skimpton type; her loud, screeching voice drowned that of the protesting child.

"Get out, get out, get out!" she said, "don't presume to come into a respectable woman's shop with your insolence and your abuse, you wretched little thief! Get out, or I will call a policeman to turn you out!"

"Hello!" said a manly and musical voice. "What is this?"

In an instant the virago had become the amiable landlady—smiling and curtseying and smoothing down her apron. The young man lodger who paid Mrs. Skimpton a pound a week regularly, and was above making any impudent inquiries respecting his coals or his cold meat, had entered the shop. Lilius was not looking at him; her wan face was slightly flushed with indignation; her eyes shone through tears. The "young man" stared at the sight of so much beauty and so much misery.

"Why do you cry?" he said.

Then Lilius looked up into a dark, beautiful, but stern face. The features were almost perfect in their chiseling; the eyes, dark and lustrous, had strange depths in them. Instinctively she thought, "This is not a pleasant face; there is no pity in it."

"Why do you cry?" the stranger repeated.

"Because I came here to find my father and brother and my friend, and they are gone, and I cannot find out where."

"If you have lost sight of them for some time," said the stranger, "most likely they have forgotten you; it is the way of the world, I assure you."

"I suppose, sir," said Lilius, looking up wistfully at the man, "that you never heard where John Martin had gone?"

"I heard nothing. I have been lodging with Mrs. Skimpton seven months, when she moved I moved with her. I slept at an inn while the moving was going on. I know nothing about any other lodgers—how should I?"

Lilius sighed and went wearily out of the shop. The man looked after her with his dark searching eyes.

"A pretty girl," he said, carelessly.

"Well, sir, handsome is as handsome does," said Mrs. Skimpton.

"Ah, then, yonder girl does not behave handsomely—is that the case?"

He asked the question with much sarcasm, but Mrs. Skimpton was not by any means a lady who was quick to detect satire; the weapon she used was good downright abuse, and she understood none other.

"I think she is a good-for-nothing like the others—her father and brother," said Mrs. Skimpton.

"Oh, then they were good-for-nothing? What does that mean in your sense of using the expression?"

The man fixed his keen, dark, handsome eyes upon Mrs. Skimpton's little sharp, weazened face in a very searching manner.

"Well," she answered, "they were as poor as rats."

"Yes," still with the searching eyes fixed on the sharp face of the virago. "As poor as rats.

That was their fault, of course? Did they pay their rent?"

"Not without a lot of trouble. Yonder girl went out to sell flowers in the streets, then some great lord got her to go and sit to an artist, and she earned a couple of pounds in a week, and then all at once the little chit disappeared. They could not find her high nor low, and just two days afterwards my brother-in-law heard of this shop and a distress being put in on the goods, and he told me, and as I had fifty pounds put by—"

"I know," said the lodger, impatiently; "you invested, and I came with you rather than trust myself among strangers, notwithstanding that the neighbourhood isn't salubrious." And he made a wry face.

"It's a very pleasant and fine morning," responded Mrs. Skimpton.

The lodger walked without ceremony across the shop and thence up the narrow but now carpeted stairs which led to the first floor formerly occupied by the Martins and poor Jack, the lame young working jeweller, now the rooms were really decently furnished and presented an aspect of cleanliness and comfort.

Mrs. Skimpton was a virago, with a hard heart and a cruel tongue, but there was not a more vigorous cleaner in London, also she was a fairly good cook. The lodger threw his great coat and hat upon the horsehair sofa, and then threw himself into a horsehair armchair and leaned back his very handsome head with a weary, haughty, yet anxious look in his fine eyes.

Presently he stirred the already bright fire into a blaze, and then the door opened, and the daughter of the house, a plain young person, very primly attired, entered with the gentleman's breakfast. He pushed back his chair and addressed her with some civil commonplaces touching the wet weather and the late hour at which he was breakfasting that day.

"You see, I am such an erratic individual," he said. "I have been miles in the rain before breakfast, and have brought home an enormous appetite. Ham and eggs? Thanks. And a crusty loaf and coffee is better with that tin milk than the stuff they carry in the streets. Oh! I am an epicure, Miss Skimpton."

Miss Skimpton tittered, she was desperately in love with the eccentric, handsome lodger, who was much given to cold bathing, and whose shirts were fine, and reckoned, as she and her mother, who had inspected his drawers, could tell, by the dozen. His hair-brushes were numerous, and had white ivory handles. He wore no jewellery save a truly magnificent ring of emerald, which never left the fore-finger of his left hand.

He possessed a dressing-case of ebony, inlaid with ivory; this box was invariably tightly locked, nor could any key with which the Skimptons had tried it open it in his absence, or so much as enter the lock.

The mysterious lodger called himself Charles Halifax. His age might have been thirty-five; he was so dark in complexion, so reserved, and yet at times so hilarious in his manners that the Skimptons felt convinced he was a foreign duke in disguise; meanwhile he paid them well. He had lodged with them now for over seven months. He had first joined them when they were living in an obscure street in Camberwell.

Matilda felt convinced that it was love for herself which made this handsome, disguised duke choose such an abode as Newport Market. She hardly dared to speculate on the possibility of one day becoming a duchess, supposing the very handsome lodger were really a duke in disguise.

"For he may be unhappily married," sighed Matilda.

But nevertheless she gave herself up to all sorts of wild fancies about Mr. Halifax. Matilda breakfasted, Matilda cleared away the things, and then he went into his bedroom, opened the ebony box, and took out a likeness. It was set in an oval gold medallion, about the size—not the shape—of a crown piece, and was

surrounded with emeralds of the same colour and water as the stone set in his ring.

And this likeness Halifax kissed with impasioned earnestness. Then he held the locket at a little distance from him, and his great dark eyes seemed to devour the fair face (for it was the face of a lovely girl on which he gazed) with burning, impasioned fervour.

"I shall never see you again," he said. "You are dead and cold, and crumbled into charnel dust. Oh, may the day of vengeance arise! It must, for Heaven is just, and the wrongs done to the dead will one day be righted by the living."

* * * * *

Lilias walked away in the rain. She had no hope of finding her father. She was not acquainted with one of the neighbours; but she went into one or two shops and asked if John Martin had left any address. She was told none, none whatever. Not a soul could tell her what had become of her father. Everybody referred her back again to Mrs. Skimpton, but Lilias felt afraid to venture within the precincts of the little shop again.

Where was she to go? She would have sought Mr. Holdsworth at once had she known his address, but he had never happened to mention it in her presence. Should she take her weary way towards Carlton Gardens? A strange fear of there meeting her powerful enemy, Lady Overbury, withheld her.

She had an idea besides that her enemy had there poisoned the minds of her former friends against her. She did set out to walk in that direction, but some strange power seemed to warn her away.

"No; I feel as if I should be insulted, disbelieved, driven away. That Mr. Holdsworth is a good man, but he has no patience with the false. And, oh, my tale seems false. Who will believe it?"

She turned and went across Oxford Street, and so straight on towards the Circus in the direction of the Langham Hotel. Instinct or the voice of Heaven must have spoken to her.

"That lady whom I once saw there at the door, she would believe me, I know. And how can I know? only because her face was so sweet and so kind, and yet I seem to know that I am right."

She walked on; the clouds had rolled away; now the rain had ceased; the May sunshine, watery but bright, came down and danced—a ruyet of fairy gold—at the girl's feet.

She paused, weary and wan, by the steps of the Grand Hotel. How far she had walked! how faint she felt! what a weary world this was! While she stood at the door of the hotel it appeared to her that the pavement rocked and the great house tottered and fell.

* * * * *

Where had she been? from what a distance it seemed to her that her soul was recalled to earth, to the sound of human voices, to the contact of human hands. Ah, why recall her? She had been resting quite peacefully in that far-off land of oblivion. Who that has been recovered when half drowned, or that has been recalled from deathlike trance, does not unwillingly at first take up the burden of life and join in the din of the busy, restless world?

Hands were chafing hers—soft hands. She felt the pressure of a ring, and then she slowly opened her eyes and met those of the lady of whom she had dreamed—great, dark, mournful yet bright and watchful eyes—beautiful as stars.

Lilias was not surprised; perhaps, in that far-off world from whence her soul had been recalled, she had looked on more wonderful sights than that which now attracted and astonished the London crowd assembled about the entrance of the Langham—namely, the spectacle of a girl in the miserable sodden garments of some penitentiary lying senseless on the step, and a lady in black velvet and with gold collar and bracelets—a lady whose carriage and liveries were waiting for her at the door—pausing first, then seating herself deliberately

on the steps and chafing the pallid hands of the slight creature.

At last she took from a bag a gold box and opened it, and held it to the white nostrils of the senseless child. Two burly policemen stood by and stared in amaze; two ladies leaving a carriage and entering the hotel saw the strange sight and murmured the words, "eccentric, but these foreign singers are odd," and certainly Donnetta is lovely, so the ladies stopped to stare at Donnetta, not at the girl. At last Lilias saw all the crowd and understood something of the situation. She strove to rise, but Donnetta held her down.

"No, you will faint again if you move. Where do you live?"

"Lady—nowhere."

"Have you no mother?"

"I do not know. I was found on the sea shore at Penglaron in Wales."

The singer uttered a wild but almost inarticulate cry.

"Tell me your name?"

"Lilias Anerly!"

The singer repressed the wild words that rose to her lips. She was white as the girl at her feet; those who watched the two faces saw a strange likeness between them, and guessed something of a strange story; but, ah, how wide of the truth.

"Rise up," said Donnetta, lifting her. "I know something of your friends; this is a prudence."

The crowd murmured and marvelled. Edith called her servants.

"Carry her in—carry her to my rooms," she said; "I happen to know something of this child. I will take all the responsibility of the care of her upon myself."

Lilias felt herself being carried carefully up the grand stairs. She was not surprised; she had always known, she said to herself, that if ever she met with that beautiful lady she would be her friend, and so she was carried up the stairs and into a sumptuous room and laid upon a silken couch in her wet miserable dress. Then she heard a discordant shriek like the shrill scream of a parrot, and there darted out from an inner chamber a little rosy cheeked, white-haired old lady, dressed like a doll in white, clear muslin and a broad blue satin sash. She had enormous gold earrings, a great gold necklace, a cap with blue feathers and a bird's nest with eggs in it. She had rather short skirts, high heeled, blue satin boots and silver buckles.

"Good heavens!" said mademoiselle, "what new whim is this, in the name of fortune, and who, in the name of pity is that dirty girl? Look at her muddy shoes. Good gracious, she may give you scarlet fever—these people always give one fever or something!"

"Mademoiselle, not a word. In a moment I will explain myself; at present, and before one single word is said, I must give this dear child a glass of port wine—the best; bring it, Patini, if you love me."

Mademoiselle brought the wine, making very wry faces all the while. Edith held the glass to the lips of Lilias, who drank, not without some difficulty.

"Now she must have a warm bath and be put to bed," said Edith.

"Put to bed—in your bed, I suppose?" said little old Patini with a scornful laugh.

"In my bed, Patini," Edith answered. "Now where else until she is strong and well again."

"Then am I to infer that you suppose you know something of this miserable little wretch?" asked the irritable old woman.

They were alone, for the servant woman had gone to prepare the warm bath and the bed in the next room.

"Do I know anything of this child," said Edith, sinking down on her knees by the side of pale Lilias, and winding her arms most passionately around the slight form. "Oh, my child, my child, my child! forgive the miserable mother who abandoned you at a moment when her brain was on fire and her heart was frozen! Forgive the wretch who has not ceased to mourn for you one hour during all these terrible

years of separation. I was ill—I had brain fever when I flung you on the sands; I do not even remember it, and now the devotion of my whole life shall atone for the past. My child, whatever you are, stained, it may be, young as you are, with the shame that is oftentimes the heritage of the poor, you are still a sacred treasure in my eyes. Henceforth, I live but for you—for your sake I will yet prove myself a truly wedded wife and the Countess of Fenrythan. You are Lady Lilias Anerly!"

Lilias raised herself on her elbow and looked her mother full in the eyes.

"Mother—you are my mother; my heart told me so at first sight. Mother, shame has never stained my cheek, only hunger has made it pale. Look into my eyes and read the truth, and—I will tell you the story of my life!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE MARTINS.

What a fairy power has gold
To charm the young and bless the old,
To heal the sick and warm the cold!
Gold! gold! gold! gold!

LILIAS spoke out of herself; her flesh was weak, but her spirit was awake; her young mind alert; she was ill, perhaps that would be the more reasonable way of expressing it, and her young brain was excited. She had her warm bath, and was placed in her mother's luxurions bed, and a celebrated physician was sent for, and he came and pronounced "this young lady" to be very ill.

Poor Lilias, it was the first time she had heard herself described as a young lady since the days when she was at the plain but respectable boarding school where she had been placed by her adopted father in the days of his comparative prosperity.

Lilias was ill, though Doctor Malden assured Madame Donnetta that the young girl's life was not in danger; but Edith was in terrible agitation.

"The love of years has been gathering and collecting into a mountain," she said to Mademoiselle Patini; "and now that I have found my child, this love is so large, it monopolises my whole being. If I lose her I have nothing to live for."

Mademoiselle took a pinch of snuff.

"You seem quite determined to believe that this girl is your child."

"She who knows nothing of me, who knew not even my name, sank down fainting at the door of this great hotel. I, passing out towards my carriage, saw her lying there, pale and beautiful as a dream-child. But I saw more: I saw the face of my Alfred, as I remember it when he lay asleep in my arms once during our brief honeymoon, when he was ill, and I was anxious. A voice in my heart spoke to me. 'That is Alfred's child and yours.' I sank on my knees by her side. I chafed her little white, delicate hands—the same, and not the same, as those tiny baby hands which I held in mine sixteen years ago, and she opened her eyes and I said to her: 'Have you a mother?'

"And she answered:

"I do not know. I was found when a babe on the seashore at a place in Wales called Penglaron."

"And then I knew that here was indeed my child; but I asked her one more question, 'What is your name?'

"And she answered:

"Lilias!"

"Well," said old mademoiselle, taking another pinch of snuff, "I hope it may turn out satisfactory in every respect. The child is quiet and pretty; but when she is well, you will be ashamed of her manners at first, I am afraid."

"I shall be proud of her. I shall accept her as a treasure sent to me a second time by Heaven," said Edith.

Lilias was ill for three weeks. Now and then her mind wandered, and Doctor Malden forbade her talking on any exciting subject. It was not

until five weeks after her arrival, faint and senseless, at the doors of the Langham that she was able to arise and attire herself in the pretty, graceful costume which her mother had provided for her; and then, leaning back in a large easy chair while her mother held her hands, she told her all the sad story of her life.

Edith shed tears, hot and bitter, when she heard all that her child had suffered, and she shared her anxiety to find John Martin and little Charlie.

"I will provide for them as if they were my own relations," said Edith, "they—at least that good man saved your life; but did he not see the account of your being found in the papers at the time? Why did he not bring you back to Penglaron?"

"He went to sea and saw no Welsh papers, and he confesses that he and his wife were so glad to have me that they made no efforts to find out if I was really missed or wanted."

Edith sighed.

"He has still, you say, the little robe which I worked with your name, and a coronet? I am an earl's wife, my child. I am the Countess of Penrythan."

Then the dark eyes of the child widened as they looked into the dark eyes of the mother.

"The Earl of Penrythan then is my father?"

"The earl—yes, you are the daughter of the Earl of Penrythan—his legitimate daughter. But—but I have to prove it."

"But there is a countess of whom all speak well. Will she—what will become of her and that handsome lord who has in truth always been kind to me; is he indeed my father? It seems to me that I could never reverence him, and yet I do not dislike him either."

"He has made my whole life desolate," said Edith, in low, deep tones. But for him I had been a blessed wife—a happy mother and a honoured countess. Now I am only a very popular public singer, and my child has wandered a beggar upon the face of the earth. But what a strange account you give, my child, of your imprisonment in that penitentiary through the plotting of some Lady Overbury. Who is this woman? I know so few people I do not remember to have seen her."

"They tell me that once the Earl of Penrythan was in love with her when she was young, and she fancied that he was going to make me his favourite in some shameful way, and so she put me out of the way."

Edith turned pale.

"What fearful thoughts come into people's minds. If it had been so, my child—if this man had harboured evil thoughts, and if this woman's cruel falsehood had placed you beyond his reach, I should bless her for her jealous spite. But this Earl of Penrythan never offended your ears with words which innocent ears should never hear!"

"Never!" said Lilius. "I could not understand his talk once about my having fine rooms and servants, but when I asked him instead to give me hard work he was kind, and I feel sure that if for a moment he thought I was a frivolous girl, because I was young and poor, he altered his mind soon. But is he, can he be, in truth my father?"

"Lilius, you are the legitimate child of the Earl of Penrythan. You and I must prove that fact to the world. Meanwhile the task is hard, and fraught with difficulties which would make almost any woman shudder. We will not mention this painful subject again, my child, until I am nearer to the attainment of my object. I would prosecute this Lady Overbury, but it will make our names too public, and for the present the world must think that you are the child of a sister who married beneath her, and for whom I have been searching for years. Meanwhile we will seek out John Martin. If we can find your adopted sister, Meggie, she may be able to tell us where your father is. The Martins must all live in comfortable lodgings in the country, where John Martin will have good cooking and attendance, and his daughter to wait on him. Charlie must go to school. I will settle one hundred and fifty pounds a year on John Martin and his heirs for ever as soon as I find them. I

am rich, my child. You also are rich. I will endeavour to atone to you, my beloved, for the years of your sufferings. You will move in refined society, and your talents shall be cultivated. You must travel abroad with me, and learn French, Italian, and music; if ever you marry—"

"I will never marry unless I love as I have sometimes dreamed of loving," interrupted Lilius. "I would rather live with you and love you only."

And the mother and child clung together, and mingled their tears and caresses.

The next thing Madame Donnetta did (we will now in general call Edith by the name by which she was known to the world) was to seek out Maggie Martin. That poor child was still in her hard situation in a London lodging-house.

She was indeed amazed when an elegant carriage drove up to the door (the poor child was engaged at the time in the useful, but not pleasant, occupation of washing down the steps), and there sprang from it a young lady, graceful in a summer toilet of fawn-coloured silk—a young lady who stooped down and kissed her, and whom she recognised as her adopted sister, Lilius.

The Martins were all well brought up, respectable, well-mannered young people notwithstanding the terrible trials to which they had been subjected. The young girl of all-work, who was pretty with a rosy, blue-eyed prettiness, looked in some alarm at the fine carriage and the lovely dress.

"Oh, Lily! You have not? I would rather work hard like this, and poor father has fretted so about you."

"Darling sister, for so I will always call you, I have found my own dear mother. She is Madame Donnetta, the great singer, and she is going to make father and all of us happy. She is an angel of goodness, more careful of me than if I were a princess. Don't stare so, Meg," with a laugh, "it is all true. But your mistress must get another servant, at least I will pay her, for I have plenty of money now, and you must come with us and have new clothes; and tell us where father is."

"He is comfortable," said Meggie. "A gentleman—two gentlemen—who knew you, came to Newport Market to inquire about you, and they could tell nothing. They put in advertisements, but got no answer. One of the gentlemen was Mr. Holdsworth, who was painting you; the other was a Mr. Vaughan, who—"

But Meggie stopped at the mention of the name.

Lilius had flushed crimson. She had heard Martin Vaughan tell the policeman his name that day in Bond Street when she had been selling flowers. Again she saw the fair face and the perfectly chiselled features which had seemed to her like the face of an angel—a strong, bright angel—she told herself.

"Oh, he promised to come, and he never came!" cried Lilius.

Meggie explained his sudden visit to Scotland to the bedside of a sick uncle.

"And most unhappily he lost your address which you had given him, and so could not write to you. When he returned he went into the neighbourhood and inquired, and was told the Martins were all there except you, and you were the one he wanted. He only described you as a lovely girl almost in rags who sold flowers and had a father and little brother. So he found father just as that cruel woman was taking to the house and shop, and dear father was in such trouble about you, so he, Mr. Vaughan, paid up all that was due, and gave father ten pounds; and father is lodging very comfortably at Camberwell. Mr. Holdsworth is a friend of Mr. Vaughan. When they compared notes they were very much surprised to find they both knew you, and they were in a terrible fright. I am afraid they thought you were wicked, and that the Earl of Penrythan knew where you were; and it made a quarrel between the earl and the two painter gentlemen. Oh, Lilius, why did you not come to me before?"

"I was so ill, Meg, and at first my head was so giddy and so confused, I never thought of you. I have been light-headed, but you shall hear all."

Then Lilius entered the house and made such liberal terms with Meg's mistress that that individual consented to release her young servant. Meg dressed in her best, poorly but neatly, and drove away in the elegant carriage with Lilius and Madame Donnetta.

We need not expatiate on the joy of John Martin and little Charles when the beautiful Donnetta appeared before them, holding Lilius, radiant and lovely, by the hand, and told them that in return for their goodness towards her who was so dear to her, she would provide for them for life.

Lilius, by the desire of her mother, wrote letters to Mr. Holdsworth and to Mr. Vaughan, thanking them for their kindness, but Edith did not wish her daughter to meet either of those gentlemen again at present. She had her reasons; she was watchful and she knew the signs of first love in a girl's heart.

"This Vaughan is a hero in her eyes," she said to herself. "Painters in general lead wild, Bohemian lives. This man is handsome and brilliant, I have heard; he may win my child's heart and never give her his. No, Lilius shall not see him until her susceptible nature is a little more hardened by contact with the world."

Edith herself wrote to Mr. Holdsworth and gave some explanation respecting Lilius; she did not say "she is my daughter," but she said:

"She is very dear to me. I have found her after long search; I mean to act a mother's part by her, and according to the best of my poor ability, train her for this world and—the next; and," she added, "Lord Penrythan had nothing to do with her disappearance."

So peace was restored between the nobleman and the painter, and then Edith took Lilius to the Continent.

* * * * *

"Only she is the most beautiful creature under the sun, and I will speak to her if it costs me my life!"

"Don't talk like an ass."

"An ass cannot talk," said a grave voice at the end of the room; "only Balaam's, and his was inspired and spoke wisely; now asses are mostly silent; it is human dolts who say foolish things."

"Don't be a human dolt, then," said the second man who had spoken, addressing André Corvier, a young French artist.

This André was fair, with pale blue eyes and a round, soft face and flaxen hair; he wore a blouse, as did most of the men assembled, for this was an artist's studio in Paris, and the young men put on the blouse to protect their clothes from paint.

The one who had spoken gravely was much handsomer than any of the others; he was tall and fair, with perfectly chiselled features, clear blue eyes, and a smile which fascinated men as well as women.

Martin Vaughan was making a copy that autumn of a certain picture in the Louvre, and so he abode in Paris, and it suited his whim to lodge in an inexpensive hotel, where were a number of artists, French, English and American, less gifted and less fortunate than himself. He was always glad to lend a helping hand to his brothers of the brush.

He found to-day that all the men were raving of the beauty of a girl who lived in an hotel opposite.

"She never goes out except with an old woman who looks like a lunatic, and nobody goes to visit them except professors who instruct the young lady. I have found out that much, and I have made up my mind that I will speak to her."

"How will you manage it?" asked a tall, sickly young American, who spoke with a New England accent; "the old woman would fly at you like a mad dog. I wouldn't stand in your shoes. Ah! there she goes."

A dozen heads were at the window, while there paced down the sunny street two figures, both remarkable—the one for exquisite grace and a face of ideal loveliness, the other for eccentric costume; it was a burlesque on youth and gaiety and elegance.

Martin Vaughan started and turned pale; the beauty of Lilia dazzled him; he recognised her, but he had not seen her since that day more than two years ago in Bond Street, when she sold violets and—wore rags!

(To be Continued.)

A ZULU BATTLE.

His Royal Highness Prince Alfred (Duke of Edinburgh) saw a Zulu sham battle when he made the tour of South Africa. After Prince Alfred had ridden through the ranks the Chief Goza gave the signal, and the evolutions began with one of the regiments marching rapidly with a leaping movement towards the spectators, sending forth at the same time a perfect hurricane of shrieks and yells. Thus they rushed up to the very feet of the Prince, then retreated, still keeping their faces towards him; then advanced again, springing aloft with great brute-like bounds, knelt, crouched, hid themselves behind their shields, lay still as death, sprang up into the air with startlingly sudden cries, brandishing their spear sticks, and drumming their shields with knee and foot.

At last the signal was given for sighting the enemy and the charge, and away they went, still in line, but with a sort of passionate pulse of movement rather than in a march, raging, yelling, gnashing their teeth, like so many panthers eager for blood. At another sign from Goza the charge became a retreat, and in the most perfect order the line changed face, the shields were slung round to the back, and a compact wall of hard-bound hide was thus presented to the pursuing foe. As the men fled they changed their cries to loud serpent-like hisses, as if to warn those who chased them that they were deadly if too closely pressed upon. Each regiment in its turn displayed its ability to be terrible. Then all united in a more complicated performance.

The different regiments charged each other, locked themselves up in folds, slid through each other's ranks, undid the tangle, and rushed into line, each man quivering with suppressed emotion, the whole three thousand feeling as one. There they stood, facing each other for a moment, as if only held by a leash. Goza gave the signal, the leash was slipped, and with redoubled yell the regiments became a frantic mob, each man hurling himself forward and upward with a fury that seemed to turn every feather and ornament on his body into instruments of war. The braves had become fiends; their passion was madness. Goza seemed at once to comprehend that the line of danger had now been reached. He rushed between the ranks, striking the shields of the foremost and those most frantic with his sword with such force as to make the leather chips fly into the air. Probably it was all acting, but if so it was the opinion of all that it was very brilliantly done. The last scene was as singular as any.

After two hours' hard sham fighting, and when the regiments had formed to march off, and were chanting in a low monotone, about a hundred women, clad only in a very scanty girdle of beads, came running with prying looks and bent forms about the field. They were savage in their aspect, and armed with short, heavy, large-headed clubs. Every now and then they stopped and aimed heavy blows upon the earth, and as they did so screamed with triumph. Their task was to kill the wounded.

M. de Lessers estimates that the projected Panama Canal will cost 750,000,000 francs, and that it can be finished in eight years.

THE COST OF CORA'S LOVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Clytie Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl,"
"Poor Loo," "Bound to the Trawl,"
"Fringed with Fire," &c., &c.

CHAPTER IX.

"I SHALL ALWAYS LOVE HIM."

While day and night can bring delight,
Or nature aught of pleasure give,
While joys above my mind can move,
For thee, and thee alone, I live. BURNS.

It was singular to notice how at times Lance Latimer's career and that of Walter Smith ran in precisely similar grooves. For instance, this morning, after the party at Lamorna Castle, both had to seek an interview with the father of the girl to whom, the night before, each had said more than prudence would dictate.

Here the parallel ceases, however; for, whereas Walter was seeking about for every argument that could tell in his favour with the guardian of his beloved, Launcelot was conjuring up every condition and circumstance which he could bring to bear to tell against himself. Morning had brought calmness if not reason to both of these young men, and each estimated pretty accurately the difficulties that lay in his path.

As we cannot be in two places at one time, and as Cora and Walter are far more interesting than Mabel and Lance, we will leave the latter for a time and devote ourselves to our hero and heroine.

Walter was out in the garden almost as soon as the early birds, and as it was long after midnight when he and his mother reached home, she, watching him from her window, deemed this early rising to be suspicious. She was a gentle, unobtrusive woman, however, the last in the world to suggest ideas that might lead to unwished for complications, and therefore she made no remark about what was passing in her mind when she joined her son at their morning meal, even though she yawned wearily while she presided over the breakfast table. When they had finished Walter had still some two or three hours left upon his hands.

He walked up to the rectory, thinking to disburden his mind, and get some comfort or encouragement from his friend Fleming Cadbury, but to his surprise, the rector had already gone out, and again poor Walter was thrown upon his own resources.

From the rectory he wandered down by the river, and finding a large block of stone by the side of the one arch that crossed the stream, he sat down upon it to watch the rushing water, and to think. There were very few boats on the Wreydon, the river was too swift and dangerous to be used much for boating, and many were the swimmers who had lost their lives, because, confident in their own strength, they had trusted themselves to its treacherous waters.

Walter sat here for a long time dreamily watching the water whirling along. He had a small pocket volume in his hand, but he was not reading; nay, he had almost fallen asleep when the sound of voices roused him—voices low, and belonging to cultivated people, one of them also very familiar to him, and he looked up suddenly, and turned round to see his friend, the rector, walking by the side of a lady.

There was nothing peculiar in this; she was one of his parishioners, no doubt, and Walter was going to turn towards the river when the rector's companion lifted her face, and he saw that she was exceedingly beautiful. A strange foreign kind of beauty, yet seeming very familiar to him, as though he had seen this type of countenance before, if not this very woman.

He smiled dreamily as this thought passed through his mind, for the stranger's face made him think of the land where he was born, the country where the father whom he could never remember to have seen, was buried, and the

determination suddenly came into his head that if Lord Lamorna forbade his suit to Cora, or made any objections that should banish him from her side, he would go away to the land that had given him birth, and see once more the country of which he retained but the most fantastic and childish remembrance.

"Good morning, Mr. Smith," said his lordship cheerily, as the young man was shown into his study. "Not knocked up with last night's exertions, I hope."

"No, my lord," in a constrained, almost timid manner.

"What is the matter then? what can I do for you?"

"I am afraid you will think I am mad as well as presumptuous in coming to you this morning, my lord," with hesitation.

"Well, I can't say; I don't know what you want. Out with it, man; don't go beating about the bush; you know I like you and would do anything in reason to oblige you. Now, what is it?"

"I love your daughter Cora."

"The deuce you do!"

The exclamation escaped his lordship in his unbound surprise, and he started to his feet in utter amazement, while the young man sat in his chair looking very much like a culprit awaiting sentence. Walter's evident humility disarmed the old man's anger, and he resumed his seat, asking wonderingly:

"Does Cora know anything of this?"

"Yes, sir, and she reciprocates my love. Perhaps," with a sigh, "that is the worst part of it."

Lord Lamorna looked at the young man before him. How vividly he reminded him of the brother of his youth. Tall, strong, handsome, with every charm of mind and person calculated to win and keep a woman's love. How unlike himself, the old man thought, sadly; but disappointment and treachery had not embittered him, and he really had a warm regard for Walter, if only for his likeness to the brother who had so long been lost.

"Well, and what is it you want of me?" he asked at length.

"I scarcely know, sir. I feel that my very presence here seems like an act of madness. I have three hundred a year from my fellowship, which I shall lose when I marry; my mother has a small income allowed her by her father, who is still living, and my grandfather may do something for me, he is rich, but he has sons who are married, so my expectations from that quarter are not great."

"And your father's family? You should expect most from them?" said the marquis.

"I know nothing of my father's family," replied the young man. "My mother always shrank from talking about my father; he was assassinated by a disappointed suitor for my mother's hand, and you can understand that the subject is painful to her."

"Yes, but I was told you were named after a brother of your father's; you must know him, of course?"

"No; my mother never saw my uncle Walter; I can hope for nothing from that side of my family. I might enter one of the professions, for I am not yet five-and-twenty, but if even after years of work I am successful the position would be nothing to offer your daughter."

"You know of course that Cora is not really my daughter?"

"Yes, my lord; I should not have ventured here this morning if she had been."

"Humph! I don't see that that alters the case very much. If you could have offered Cora a positively good position, better than I can give her or leave to her when I die, I might have felt that I was doing my duty to her unknown parents in consenting to her marriage; but you cannot do this, she is but a child, and four years must elapse—as well as we can judge—before she will be of age; therefore you will have to wait that time definitely, and it will depend upon her decision and upon yourself, whether or not I can then consent to any engagement or marriage between you."

A tap at the door was heard at this moment, and a girl's voice asked :

" May I come in, papa?"

" Yes, if you like." And the next instant, Cora Lyster, her fair face covered with blushes, stood before them.

She gave her hand shyly, but confidently, to Walter, then she took a seat by the side of her mother.

" I knew you were talking about me, papa," she said, while the tears started to her eyes, though she resolutely kept them from falling, " and I thought you and Walter would not mind my coming in to join you, and I thought that perhaps, you would both of you understand me, and each other, better, if I came and said what I want to say."

" Well, Athene, speak the words of wisdom," said the marquis, lightly ; he dreaded the sentimental element getting uppermost, and he had a most masculine horror of tears.

" I want to tell you, papa dear, that though I love Walter very dearly, and will never marry anybody else if I live to be ever so old, that I don't want to leave you and dear auntie, and that I will wait as long as ever you like, and that I will not even marry Walter without your consent, but—" with something like a sob, " I shall always love him." And as a means of expressing her love for Walter, she threw her arms around her father's neck, unable any longer to repress her tears.

I don't think Walter found the situation very satisfactory, certainly the marquis did not, for he untwined the girl's arms, made her sit up, called her a goose, and then, when he had calmed her a little, proceeded to repeat what he had said to Walter about the necessity of their waiting until she was of age before any positive engagement could be contemplated.

Like an April sky after rain, Cora's face now beamed with smiles, and turning to her lover she said :

" You won't go away after what papa has said, will you, Walter?"

" Yes, I think I must go to South America," he replied ; " but I shall go with hope in my heart, and shall look forward to returning with brighter prospects than those with which I set out."

The girl's face became clouded again, and she said anxiously :

" But you may get drowned, hundreds of things may happen, and some dreadful man may kill you as your father was killed. Oh, don't go there ; why can't you stay in England?"

" My best chance of success in making money lies in my going to South America," said Walter, sadly ; " my mother's family have large interests in silver mines, I could probably help them, whereas in any other field or pursuit of life I should start with no more advantage than any other man."

Cora looked at the marquis, mutely asking his aid, but he said :

" You are quite right. It will be better for you to go away and feel that you are working to win a wife ; and you may do a service for me also, but I will talk of that later. I shall not object to your writing to Cora, or to her replying to your letters, but you will both of you understand that there is no engagement between you."

" Until I am twenty-one, papa," expostulated the girl.

" Until you are twenty-one, when, with the consent of all three of us an engagement may be entered into, but you are both of you perfectly free in the interval, remember."

The lovers' eyes met in a glance of mutual faith and love. What lovers ever yet believed that the new-born passion of to-day would not prove eternal ? Walter and Cora had no fears for the future, they neither doubted themselves nor each other. The happiness they looked forward to was far ahead, but it was not unattainable ; youth is always hopeful, and the lovers never dreamed of the terrible peril that her love would cost him.

" You can go and tell your aunt, Cora—but stop, I'll go myself, you can join us in the pea-

cock drawing-room in a few minutes, and before I go I may as well observe that I don't wish this understanding—it is not an engagement—to be talked about or made known to anyone beyond my sister and your mother, Walter, you understand."

" Yes, sir, but I should like to tell Fleming Cadbury why I am leaving England," said the young man ; " it will seem like a want of confidence in him if I do not."

" We will make an exception in his favour ; do you want a confidante, Cora?" with a smile.

" No, papa, I shall bother you and auntie, and then I shall have Walter's mother to talk to about him ; but poor Walter will be away from us all," with a sigh.

" Nonsense, he will soon come back again rich as Cresus, and able to buy half a county."

Then the marquis left the room, perhaps he thought his presence could for a few minutes be dispensed with.

" My darling—one day to be my very own," said Walter, as he clasped the fair girl in his arms. " I ought to be a very happy man, but I feel sad : it is the thought of parting."

" But why must you go ? There is no real necessity for it. Don't go to South America, Walter !"

" I must, my love. It is strange how the feeling that I must go to Peru has taken possession of me. Just the sight of a woman's face whom I do not know, whom I never remember to have seen before, and all the old longing of my childhood to revisit that wonderful country, the land of my birth, came over me so strongly, that I resolved, if I must wait for you, or if there was no hope for me, I would go out there. It is only the thought of leaving you behind that grieves me."

In her pretty winning way she consoled him, until they suddenly started with the conviction that the marquis and Lady Bellinda would be both wondering at their delay in joining them.

" Rubbish ! madness !" her ladyship was saying, as the young people came into the room. " Why couldn't you say 'yes' or 'no' ? I hate such shilly-shallying."

" But I have practically said yes," returned her brother, wishing that the lovers had not come in quite so soon.

" And what are they to live upon ? Air ?" Then nodding to Walter, who came forward to greet her, she said :

" So you and Cora have been making a couple of tools of yourselves, I hear ?"

" It is a kind of folly that many people indulge in," replied Walter with a smile, " and this is the best excuse I can offer for my share in it," and he took the girl's hand in his own, and retained it.

" Humph ! Of course it's of no use talking to you, and now you will be writing letters, and fretting and fuming, one on this side of the globe and the other on that, making two houses miserable instead of one. I don't see what you want to wait so long for if you are going to get married at all."

" Unfortunately, we have no choice," returned the young man, " and to call Cora my wife I would gladly serve as long as Jacob did for Rachel."

" Well, I don't approve of long engagements," continued Lady Bellinda ; " not but that twenty-one is young enough," she added, reflectively.

" And you are not displeased, auntie ?" asked the girl, when the marquis and Walter had moved off to another part of the room.

" No, I suppose must come at some time ; but I am surprised. I have suspected something once or twice ; then I felt convinced I was mistaken."

" I believe it was the gipsy's fault, auntie. She frightened me, and I let Walter see that I loved him, but for that, he was going away without saying a word about his love for me."

Perhaps Lady Bellinda thought it would have been better if he had, but she made no remark to this effect ; she liked the young man, she loved Cora, and she could not help seeing that they were genuinely in love with each other.

As they were thus talking, the door opened, and Lance Latimer came into the room. His face was flushed, something had occurred to

ruffle him, and an ugly look of hatred came over his face as he noticed on what very friendly terms were the marquis and Walter Smith.

Lady Bellinda saw it, she had, of late, taken to watch the countenance of her young kinsman, and perhaps she read there more than he guessed.

By a pure accident, also, she had been a witness of the scene by the statue the previous night, and she was wondering whether or not he had been over to Beverly Chase. He volunteered no remark that would help her to a conclusion, however, and being not only curious but spiteful where he was concerned, she said :

" Lady Beverly left her fan here last night, you might leave it at the Chase if you are going for a ride this afternoon, Mr. Latimer."

" With pleasure," was the reply.

Then Lady Bellinda concluded that Sir Augustus had remained indoors the whole of that morning in vain.

CHAPTER X.

DIPLOMACY.

Where nature's end of language is declined,
And men talk only to conceal their mind.

Yours,

LANCE LATIMER had not been to Beverly Chase. As a matter of fact, he had been trying all the morning to screw his courage to the sticking point, and he had even got half way on the road, when he met Sir Timothy Spanker, who expressed himself anxious to have his opinion upon a new horse, of which he had just become the possessor.

Glad of any excuse, however trivial, to postpone the dreaded interview, Lance yielded to the suggestion that he should change his course, and ride back to Spanker Park with its owner. The horse was inspected, the stables and kennels had visits paid to them, and then, declining an invitation to remain to luncheon, Latimer rode back slowly and thoughtfully to the castle. He regretted now, when the time had slipped by him, that he had not ridden over to Beverly Chase immediately after breakfast. Delay had certainly done no good. The Beverlys were not people to let him escape in this manner, and if he did not wish to marry Mabel—as he certainly did not—he must convince them that he was not worth marrying.

He must not quarrel with them, he must retain Lady Beverly's friendship and be able to rely upon her for any co-operation that he might require in social matters, and he could not hide from himself that to avoid compromising himself and yet do all that he felt necessary, would be a matter of no small difficulty. He was in this frame of mind when Lady Bellinda's suggestion that he should take Lady Beverly's fan with him to the Chase seemed to make the time at which he must go more definite.

Luncheon passed over and Lance found the conversation flag. He asked Cora to ride with him, but she excused herself from doing so. His next suggestion that Mr. Smith should join him was equally unsuccessful, everybody seemed to prefer their own company to his ; all the men who had been staying at the castle had only remained for the party of the night before, and had left early this morning, so that Latimer was now again the only guest.

Why Walter Smith should be here so often he could not imagine, it annoyed him and made him a trifle uneasy, for he could not shut his eyes to the possibility of his becoming his rival, not only in the favour of Cora but also in that of the marquis.

None of the party paid much attention to him, however, and at length, feeling that he could not be less appreciated elsewhere he ordered a horse to be saddled and asked Lady Bellinda for Lady Beverly's fan.

He could almost believe that the spiteful old woman knew of the ordeal that was in store for him, as she ordered the fan to be brought to her and gave him sundry messages to deliver with it to the owner.

It is too late to turn back now, and with a

curious wonder in his mind as to what Juanita would say and do, if she knew of his errand, he rode off direct to Beverly Chase.

Lady Beverly was in the drawing-room alone when he was shown in, and something like a frown rested upon her proud but well preserved countenance. Seeming not to notice it he gave the fan, delivered his messages, and then sat silent playing with the ears of the lap-dog.

"Sir Augustus is out," her ladyship commenced, in a tone which seemed to imply that something was wrong or had been neglected.

"He is," carelessly.

"Yes; he expected you this morning.

"Ah! I started to come over but was detained on the road; then I thought it would be just as well for me to have a chat with you first. The fact is, Lady Beverly," with smiling frankness, "I last night made a great idiot of myself."

"How, Mr. Latimer?"

Her ladyship's face was as hard and as severe as the face of Medium. Was it possible that the prize upon which she and her daughter had congratulated themselves, was about to escape them. Impossible! or, if it were possible there should be a hard fight for it.

"It was a very pardonable folly from my point of view," the young man went on; "and you must consider the temptation and provocation, Lady Beverly. I forgot that I am a miserably poor man, and that I am over head and ears in debt; I forgot everything, in fact, but that your daughter was beautiful, and I allowed myself to be carried away by my feelings. Was not that making an idiot of myself?"

"The truth is that you wanted to retire from the position in which you voluntarily placed yourself, last night, I suppose?" asked her ladyship with inflexible severity and indubitable signs of rising anger.

"Certainly not! most certainly not, Lady Beverly!" exclaimed the young man with somewhat overacted eagerness. "I simply tell you what my position is. Sir Augustus is evidently a rich man, and if he will give Mabel a decent fortune, supposing she has not one in her own right, we may be able to get along pretty well; it is my own poverty that would have kept me silent if I had not lost my head last night."

Lady Beverly's face fell.

"My daughters will have no fortunes on their marriage," she said. "I thought you understood that, Mr. Latimer."

"I!" in affected surprise, "how is it possible that I should know this?—for, pardon me, you are rich, and you have no son."

"No, but the estate is entailed and will go with the title to a cousin. There will be their father's personal property to divide between them at his death; but that is all."

"What am I to do, Lady Beverly?" he asked, in a helpless, confiding tone and manner. "I am in your hands entirely; I admit my fault in yielding to my feelings last night. I ought not to have done so, but we are not always wise. What shall I do?"

Her ladyship felt that her weapons were turned aside. She knew that she was being beaten, but she had been obliged to admit that her daughter had no dowry, and with this ugly fact before her, she could not very well reproach another for poverty.

"You say you are really poor and in debt?" she asked, in a tone which seemed to invite him to be more explicit with regard to his means.

"Yes; I have only five hundred a-year, and I owe more than five thousand pounds, fully ten years' purchase of my income."

"But you are Lord Lamorna's heir."

"Am I? I wish I thought so and could convert my creditors to the same belief."

"But are you not, really?"

"No; I am only a cousin several times removed; there is no heir to the marquisate unless Lord William Lyster, who went away some thirty years ago, returns, or some child or children of his put in a claim and can support it."

"But you are heir to some of the inferior titles, I am sure?"

"Yes, if there are no claimants in right of Lord William Lyster; after the death of the two old people at the castle, the barony of De Wreydon will come to me in right of my mother, but the title is an empty one and not an acre of land goes with it."

"But the marquis can't take his wealth with him when he dies," impatiently.

"No, but he can will it away to anyone he likes while he lives," replied Latimer, "and I feel convinced that it is perfectly useless my asking him to make me an allowance for the purpose of enabling me to marry your daughter. He has never spoken to me in a manner which would imply that I have the least claim upon him for help or assistance."

"He might help you to some good appointment, he has great influence; if you could get some post that would give you a thousand a year, with the five hundred you now have, you might manage to marry; it is a very poor position for my daughter, but there are the possibilities of the future, and his lordship surely will not leave that girl he adopted all his property."

Latimer shook his head.

"My cousin will get me no appointment," he said, positively, "he would not incur the obligation it would involve. I heard him say something to that effect the other day, and anything I could get for myself would be too poor to be worth taking."

"But Lord Lamorna must have some intention or making you his heir, or he would not have invited you to the castle," persisted her ladyship, who was reluctant that her prey should quite escape her.

"What motive he may have I cannot say," was the reply; but I very much fear that if he does benefit me by his will—supposing he has made one—it will be saddled with a condition that will be exceedingly unpalatable."

"You mean, that he will want you to marry Cora?"

"I can't take liberties with a lady's name," he returned, with an affection of chivalry, "and nothing has been said to warrant my doing so. No; the best thing that can happen for me is, that my cousin should not make a will, but that is very improbable, and after all, it is weary work waiting for dead men's shoes."

"And what do you propose?" asked Lady Beverly, restraining the inclination to get up and stamp about the room with taunted rage, or to indulge in a copious flood of tears.

"I don't propose anything," replied Lance Latimer, leaning back in his chair and fondling the lap-dog which he had again taken on his knee. "We cannot live on love. Mabel has no money; neither have I; if it will be any satisfaction to her or to you, I am quite ready to enter into an engagement of indefinite length; but, for my own part, I don't urge it, because I feel I should be doing a wrong to your daughter. If I had a fortune, it would be my first act to entreat her to share it, but until I have, or until there is some prospect of my having one, I do not feel that it would be just or honourable to ask her to bind herself to me."

"And if your position and prospects brighten, you will come and ask her again, I am to infer, Mr. Latimer?"

"Most certainly; it would be my first step."

"Then I think we will leave it like that. There is to be no engagement, nothing of the kind, remember; fortune may be more favourable to you than you anticipate, then we shall expect you back again in your present character, and meanwhile, you must understand that Mabel is quite free."

"Yes," in a tone of resignation; but you won't banish me from your society, or refuse me your friendship?"

"No, but I don't wish this interview to be spoken of, or the arrangement we have made to become known to anyone."

"Most certainly not. It is a little hard, perhaps, but a poor man has to bear many burdens that never weigh upon his richer brethren," with a sigh.

"Oh, you will be rich yet," with an attempt at cheerfulness.

"I hope so," with another sigh; "may I see Mabel?"

"No, certainly not to-day. I must talk to her, poor girl, and when you do meet you must not repeat or allude to what occurred last night. I rely on your honour to make no difference between your manner towards her and towards her sisters. Your name and hers must not on any account be coupled together under present circumstances."

The young man bent his head and walked to one of the windows. It was difficult to hide his satisfaction at the turn affairs had taken, and at the stipulations laid down, which accorded so well with his own desires, and as for the contingency of his coming back as a suitor if ever he became rich, he regarded the promise as utterly valueless, and from the moment it was asked of him, he had no thought or intention of keeping it.

He assumed a melancholy air, however, it was too soon for him yet to throw off the mask, but he pretended to be so overcome that when the Rev. Fleming Cadbury was announced he rose and with a few words of excuse took his leave. The two men just bowed to each other when they met and that was all.

"Mr. Latimer seems in a hurry for the first time in his life," remarked the rector as he sank into a seat by one of the windows.

"Yes, he does," was the reply.

"I am not addicted to gossip, but if he had remained long enough I think I should have asked if I might congratulate him," pursued the rector, whose presence here was accounted for by his having a definite object in view.

"Indeed! Upon what?" asked her ladyship, with an air of the most engaging surprise and candour.

"If your ladyship does not know, it is quite as well that I did not introduce the subject," was the reply.

"What do you mean, Mr. Cadbury? What a very mysterious man you are; pray tell me what you are speaking of. What is there that I should know?"

"Really, Lady Beverly, if you will excuse me I will say no more. Through some mistake I have said too much already. How are the young ladies after their dissipation last night?"

Lady Beverly thought a few seconds and did not answer this question. Then she looked up suddenly and said:

"Mr. Cadbury, I am going to confide in you. Mr. Latimer has just been proposing to me for my daughter Mabel, and I have refused his suit, for he is not in a position to marry. But we shall always be very good friends, as of course we should wish to be with any member of the Lamorna family."

The rector bowed his head, the entrance of the three "dear girls" precluded any verbal reply.

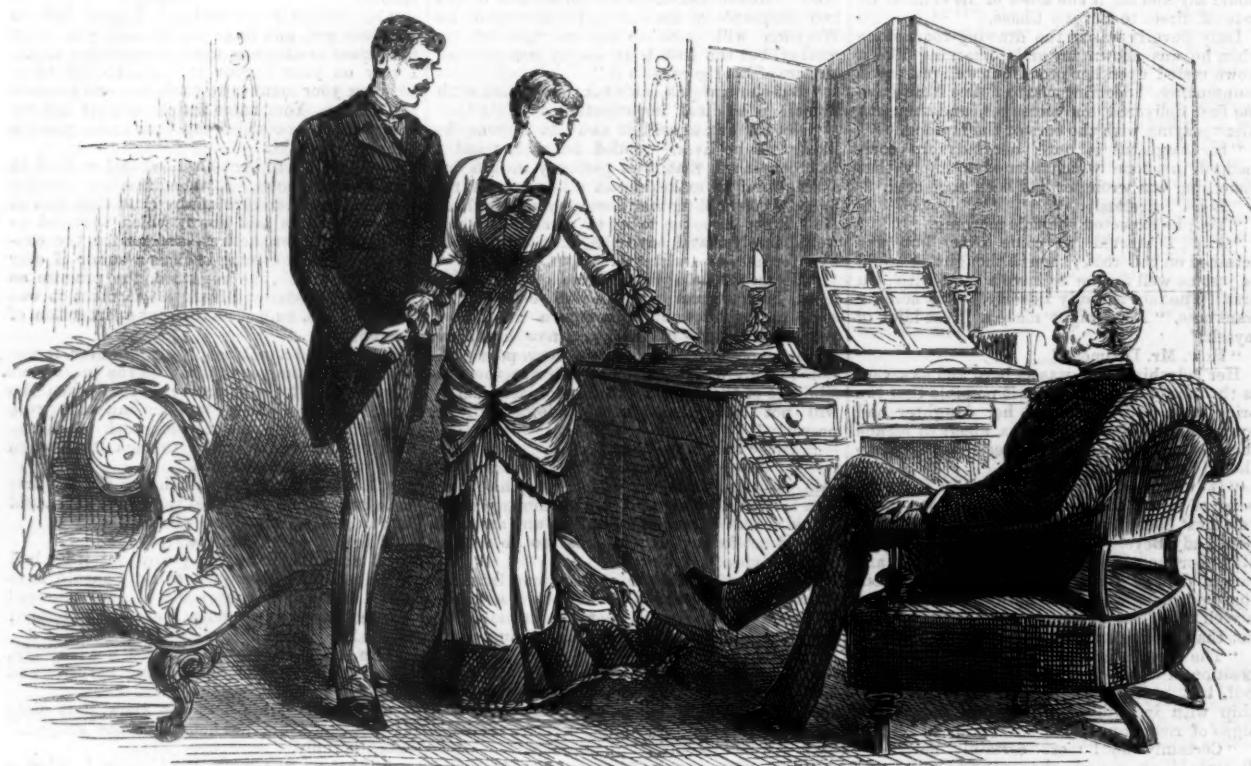
Mabel Beverly glanced round the room sharply when she walked into it; then, seeing only the rector and her mother, her face became pale and her heart sank in her breast like lead.

She knew that Latimer had been here, and she felt instinctively that his going away without seeing her boded no good.

Where now were the bright fancies she had woven for herself during the past twelve hours. Already in imagination she had been mistress of Lamorna Castle, receiving her mother, patronising her sisters and snubbing Lady Spanker, who had very often taken occasion to snub her.

Now, the bright vision seemed as though it had been nothing but a creation of her own imagination without any substratum of fact to rest upon, and for the moment, she almost wondered if she had dreamed the events of the past night, if in very truth Lance Latimer had kissed her and spoken as though he loved her.

She made no effort to talk with the rector, her sister Edith was told off for his entertainment, so after a few languid and commonplace remarks she took a seat near one of the windows, caressed "Fi-fi," the lap-dog, and wished very sincerely that the little creature had been gifted with the power of speech and could repeat to



[CORA'S CONFESSION.]

her the conversation that had just taken place in its hearing. That her mother would only repeat such parts of it as suited her own plans and purposes she felt convinced.

Soon after this the rector departed. He had gained the information which he had promised Juanita he would obtain for her, and he had no other motive for remaining longer than civility required.

Moreover the attentions which Lady Beverly and her daughter Edith bestowed upon him were too marked to fail in being understood, and as he had not the remotest intention of placing himself in the same predicament as Lance Latimer had stumbled into, he considered discretion the better part of valour and so beat a retreat. Left alone with her own offspring, the mask fell from Lady Beverly's face, she threw herself back in her chair wearily and said in a tone of contemptuous bitterness: "It's of no use, you are all born to be old maids, I shall never marry any of you."

"I don't think you will, mamma," retorted Mary, who was too much like her mother not to assert herself occasionally. "If you didn't show us about and sing our praises like an auctioneer trying to get rid of sham jewellery men might think we were worth cultivating on our own merits, but as it is they all think there must be something wrong or you wouldn't be in such a hurry to be rid of us. And besides, you frighten them off; a man doesn't dare to be more than barely civil to us, but you take him by the throat, metaphorically I mean, of course, and demand his intentions; I suppose you have frightened Mr. Latimer off now."

"I wish I could frighten you off, you insolent girl!" exclaimed her mother, passionately. "If it were not for the scandal of the thing I would order you to leave the house this very day. You ungrateful creature, when I have done so much for you."

"Yes, you have done much for me, mamma; you have made me despise myself over and over again when you have been trying to induce some man to make a matrimonial bid for me and he

would not. But you need not talk about ordering me to leave home, for I intend to do so. I mean to have a career in life beyond that of husband hunting. I have been thinking of it for some time, and I have definitively made up my mind upon the subject to-day."

"What do you mean? Are you mad, Mary?" asked Lady Beverly, startled out of her bad temper at this sudden declaration of independence in her family; "a daughter of mine with a 'career,' as you call it; a 'career,' indeed," with a mocking laugh; "you are scarcely stupid enough or conceited enough to think you can go on the stage at thirty."

"No; my age will be in my favour in the career I have decided upon. I mean to be a nurse."

"A nurse?" echoed her mother and sisters in dismay.

"Yes; I mean to go in for a regular course of training at a nursing home or hospital; so you may almost consider that you have married off one of your daughters, mamma, and have only two on your hands to dispose of."

There was something so decided in Mary Beverly's tone and manner, that her mother instinctively felt that ordinary remonstrance was useless in this case, and she now uttered the thought uppermost in her mind when she said:

"But the marquis—surely you will not throw away your chances in that quarter for a mere passing whim or freak of temper?"

"The Marquis of Lamorna will never marry; he told me so last night," returned Mary, calmly. "Evidently he saw the trap you were laying for him, and he wished to spare my feelings. He was very nice, he told me something about his early life, and he regretted that he could not make up his mind to ask any living woman to be his wife; but he said positively he never should do so. I was not disappointed, mamma; I know what your plans are usually worth. But I have taken the bit in my teeth now, and I shall go my own way, let the road be ever so rough or thorny."

So saying she walked out of the room, leaving

her mother and sisters almost speechless with astonishment.

"I almost think Mary is right," remarked Edith, thoughtfully, after a few seconds of silence. "Men have a purpose in life, and work to do in the world, while we are but like dressed up dolls standing and sitting about to be looked at."

"You had better become a nurse, too," sneered her ladyship, "unless you think you are better fitted for a 'lady help,' you would be able to perform a scullery-maid's duties to perfection."

"It is easy enough to sneer, mamma, but the life you lead us, in your anxiety to get us married, is enough to drive us to anything to escape from it. Did you see just now how Mr. Cadbury seemed intentionally to ignore me when you kept on singing my praises? I felt perfectly enraged and disgusted."

With which Miss Edith took herself out of the room, having said what she would never have dared to utter if Mary had not first set the ball rolling.

"You had better follow them," said Lady Beverly, in a tone of spiteful resignation; "you have quite as much cause as they have to be dissatisfied with home; for Lance Latimer won't marry you, he has told me so."

"Mamma! Has he dared to do so?"

"Well, it amounts to that."

Then Lady Beverly told Mabel what had passed between Latimer and herself, and the terms agreed upon between them.

"But he doesn't mean to keep his word, even if he ever has the chance of doing so," she concluded by saying, "I am sure of it."

"Doesn't he?" hissed the girl between her white lips, while her blue eyes flashed dangerously. "Then I mean that he shall. I never loved him, now I hate him, but I will marry him for all that if he is ever rich enough to be worth having; yes, I will marry him, if it is only to make his life a burden to him."

(To be Continued.)



[A PROSPECT OF INDEPENDENCE.]

LORD JASPER'S SECRET; —OR— BETWEEN PALACE AND PRISON.

By the Author of "*Lady Violet's Victims.*"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ENGLISH GOVERNESS.

There is light upon my path.
There is sunshine in my heart,
And the leaf and fruit of life
Shall not utterly depart.

A WEEK passes before Eustacia makes up her mind to apply for a situation. Now a "situation" sounds highly practical; it is a sort of vague torture held before the minds of nervous, sensitive people. The first idea that occurs to young women who have to earn their own bread and butter (butter strictly limited and double Dorset at the best), the bugbear of all dishonest, idle, incompetent, slatternly beings turned adrift on the world is, "I must get a situation."

The heiress of fifty thousand pounds finds herself in the same unpleasant predicament as the lonely "Janes" and "Marys" of the world. To be sure her life at present is sumptuous in the extreme. The noble mansion in which she is staying has lovely oak-panelled rooms, magnificent grates, and baronial mantelpieces. Her bedroom rivals the one she occupied when a guest of the ill-fated Countess de Remolles, but for all that, what is she but an intruder?

Of course "my guest" sounds very pretty and comfortable indeed, while it bears no faint resemblance to that of an intruder; but guests come and go, and intruders have a trick of turning into solid fixtures like the cornices, and

poles and door plates and chandeliers, and other difficult things to remove.

Eustacia can never become an intruder in anyone's house, therefore she must look out for a situation, and at once.

The count's sister is thoroughly bright and pleasant, a widow lady about forty, with all the winning grace of a refined and highly-born woman; she knows her brother has an infatuated admiration for Eustacia, and perhaps no sister ever quite approves of the idol her brother sets apart on a shrine. In fact, she thinks a good deal of it is romantic nonsense, and that Eustacia will be much better working for her living in a situation; indeed Madame de Camours is exerting herself all in her power to find a suitable berth for the young English girl.

To-day, as the carriage drives to the door, she is holding two letters in her hand, answers to an advertisement she has inserted in a fashionable paper, and Eustacia fancies from the expression of her face that one will be highly advantageous.

"Have you any news for me, madame?" she asks, as Madame de Camours offers her the note.

Eustacia is dressed in the deepest mourning for her supposed father, Evelyn Count de Remolles, mourning simply but fashionably made. She has learnt to look at her future quietly but firmly as a life of toil and endurance, without pleasure, ease, or emotion.

Lord Jasper has left her heartbroken without, as she thinks, a letter, word or sign, for the few lines he had hastily penned to her describing his enforced absence and flight, never reached her, and the world seems very dark.

But time, which lessens the poignancy of grief and often effaces everything, brings its healing balm. It finds her thoroughly sane, and as she believes, highly prosaic, looking about for a situation, instead of becoming the Countess Mancelli, and reigning in the mansion wherein she is now but a guest.

When a woman is brokenhearted, she often

finds a dreary solace in active discomfort, or maybe fancies she does. Eustacia feels some piteous sense of satisfaction in thinking Lord Jasper may hear of her battling with the world in some respectable form of high-class servitude—governess to some smiling cherubs in white muslin dresses, varied alternately by pink or blue silk sashes—cherubs who have the haziest knowledge of irregular French verbs, and whose manipulation of five-fingered exercises is one of those terrible performances of modern schoolroom life better imagined than listened to or described.

Madame de Camours is very candid; in fact, her candour is one of her strong points. Once rid of Eustacia, her darling brother Giovanni will return and head the table and take her out to operas, fêtes and concerts again. A woman under the distressing circumstances of missing pleasures of this kind, through the existence and presence of another, very soon finds the opportunity of getting rid of the objectionable cipher, always of course in the most amiable and conciliatory manner.

"Just the very thing for you, my dear girl," the widow murmurs, watching Eustacia as she reads the letter. "You know that you're a beautiful pianiste, and you see that Mrs. Ruthven emphatically insists on securing a fine player, her daughters having decided genius for music—actually getting up at six in the summer to practise their scales."

Eustacia mentally pictures the happy family group. She can even fancy she hears the terrible F minor scale, and opus 303 at all times and seasons. She ventures to ask where Mrs. Ruthven resides.

"Is the situation in England, madame?"

The widow shakes her head.

"No, my dear girl, and that is the charming part of it; teaching in England is sometimes quite too awfully dreary, this lady is now going to Paris, gay, beautiful, frivolous Paris, where everything is so different, so bright, so un-speakably interesting."

"I know Paris," Eustacia answers, thinking

of Evelyn and the opera, their little Bohemian festivals, his strange companions, and the various brilliant specimens of prime donne who had called upon him when in the zenith of his career, and two guinea lessons had brought many luxuries in their train.

"And of course you can speak French like a native—such an advantage. Mrs. Ruthven will secure you at all hazards, at a word from me; we were school friends. Wealthy? Oh, yes! immensely. Wouldn't like to leave England. Oh! nonsense! my dear child, it will be the making of you."

She is thinking of the desolate unconsecrated grave amid the lonely Cumberland hills and glances at the heavy crape on her sleeve.

"I know you've had a trial, a sad and irreparable misfortune, Eustacia. You have lost your father under most painful circumstances, so, my dear girl, a change of scene will work wonders and quite restore your nerves; strangers and employment are always such excellent tonics when one has a little soupçon of morbidity in our veins."

"I will accept this situation and gladly," Eustacia hastens to say. "I think it will be highly advantageous, and I shall be so glad to see Paris again."

Glad, perhaps, to feel the danger of her being an intruder and fixture here is also soon to end, and that the pensive smiles of the amiable widow will not have had time to turn into the slightly jaundiced ones of aversion or contempt. And yet Laranza's words recur to her with heart-cutting truth. "I will bring you ten thousand young women all on a level with your attainments screaming, 'Give us work!'

She has no genius wherewith to hold the world at bay, only a poor little modicum of talent—viz., that of teaching, and she is not so very sure that after all she possesses the necessary qualifications to become a governess.

"I am now going to pay some visits; you can accompany me if you like. I think very probably Mrs. Ruthven will call on me late this afternoon, and you can then be introduced to her."

So the wily Madame de Camours had really cleverly planned the matter for several days, and been in correspondence with her dearest Anne. Anne fortunately was not a widow dependent on the caprices of a severely disposed brother, but a woman of the world apt to look upon governesses as only three parts human, the remaining quarter of their humanity being a sort of profitable mental carion for wealthy crows to appropriate.

"Where do you think of calling?" Eustacia asks.

She is surely now a guest who comes and goes, since the "intruder" is being shaped into a governess.

"On dear Lady Emmeline Fitzmaurice. Her darling child is to be married soon to Sir Harry Templeton, a splendid fellow, an excellent party, and Maude adores him."

Eustacia is now very pale, and reads Mrs. Ruthven's letter over again. Her nature, which under the mesmeric glow of a great passion must have grown nobler and finer, like that of a plant fostered by light and the sun, is hardening and withering silently. It is ever the case with strong souls; the weak and tender die of that harsh struggle with the world.

"I was not aware you knew Lady Fitzmaurice."

"No? Well, ours is but a recent acquaintance—still, you know, one is always making new friends in society. I am not like Giovanni, who would shut himself up for ever. I like gaieties."

Eustacia has long yearned to hear the name dearest above all others to her, and to sit in the comfortable barouche while Madame de Camours is visiting Lady Fitzmaurice has a decided attraction.

She will see the mansion in Eaton Square which she visited in company with Mrs. Slater the first time she saw Lord Jasper, and may she not hear something regarding him explaining his silence and absence?

Eustacia takes especial care to-day with her

toilette, and perhaps nothing could better suit her dark and striking style of beauty than the mourning robe that harmonised with her grave young sadness. There is something inexorable in certain forms of grief, and hers is wasting as a swift and consuming fire.

Madame de Camours adored paying visits. She has the aerial faculty of being perfectly at ease under every circumstance, saying also the prettiest and most artlessly foolish things with that air of graceful simplicity which is the principal charm of such women. Eustacia follows her through the softly carpeted hall, and is just getting into the carriage when Count Manoelli rides up on horseback.

"There's my brother," Madame de Camours mutters, vexed at his arrival, but seeing that he pays for both horses and carriage, her wardrobe and general expenses, it is politic to look enchanted, and she is a woman who never forgets a part.

She returns to the house, beckoning Eustacia to enter with her, for who is Giovanni seeking but the inflexible, mournful-eyed girl in her mable garments.

"Don't let me spoil your drive," the count says, as he shakes hands with both; "I've just come from the Ladies' Mile, which is densely crowded to-day."

Eustacia is still standing by the side of his sister, who takes care not to leave them alone. Safely disposed of to the tender mercies of the excellent Mrs. Ruthven, Eustacia may fade out of their lives, and Giovanni continue to spend a considerable portion of his handsome income on herself. To be sure men are very often strangely obstinate, and even on occasions faithful, especially when it's a question of an undesirable match which is at stake.

"Obstinate as a mule," thinks Madame de Camours, who sees that flame in his eyes, ardent as Tasso's, strong and subtle as that which may have illumined those of Mirabeau dreaming of Sophie.

"Where did you think of calling to-day, Laura?" asks the count, walking to the window.

"On Lady Fitzmaurice. You may as well come too. She is most anxious to see you."

"Yes," he answers, quietly, "I will come."

Eustacia knows that she will stare at the great porch and the shining windows, and think of the caprice of that worldling so unutterably dear, who seems to have dropped out of life ever since the day he had visited her in the prison, and sworn to bring her father to her aid.

"I think we have secured a most comfortable home for your protégée," Madame de Camours continues, lightly; "she has quite set her heart on being a governess."

The count starts, almost imperceptibly.

"You are resolved, then, to fight your way in the world?" he says, glancing suddenly at Eustacia.

"Quite resolved," she answers, smilingly.

"Why not? thousands do it."

"They are not like you, the greater portion are dull and commonplace."

Some remembrance of his thoughtful care and affection—an affection she will vainly seek elsewhere—moves her with an overpowering sense of gratitude. He prays she may meet a very hard-hearted British matron who will make her so supremely uncomfortable by worry, nagging, and work, that she will resign her independent resolve of battling with life, to take his name and share his home.

"If you are ready, shall we have our drive?" he asks his sister, who is conscious that a very great danger threatens her personal comfort and position. Giovanni is evidently insane enough to think of throwing his rank, wealth and position at the feet of a girl probably picked out of the mud.

"Where has she sprung from?" Madame de Camours has often asked, while the count has merely smiled, or coughed, and shrugged his shoulders.

Lady Emmeline Fitzmaurice receives her guests with her usual well-bred affability. The count eagerly waits for some allusion to Lord Jasper, and Mr. Codicil, who is tête-à-tête with

her ladyship, shakes his head in his very best "family interest" manner, as if Lord Jasper's career must be utterly hopeless and discreditable.

"We have every reason to believe he has joined the Austrian army," Lady Emmeline explains, mysteriously. "Something unexpected always, you know, must happen to poets and artists. I shouldn't wonder in the least he is living with some lighthouse man, and is writing a sonnet on the ocean, or sketching rocks, or doing missionary business, and comforting savage tribes with beads and bibles and that sort of thing."

Madame de Camours says, "Indeed?" for what is Lord Jasper's secret to her, but the count speaks guardedly.

"Have you any idea where Lord Jasper is now staying?"

He himself devoutly hopes either that the lighthouse may be swept into the sea, or that some elastic-minded savage chief has devoured his lordship as superior "pickings."

"Not in the very least. A letter we received from him last month shows he is in a very dependent mood, but then worry and debts—"

Mr. Codicil here glances over his spectacles, and looks as if he were praying.

"Debts!—ah!—bad—very bad, indeed," the admirable lawyer repeats, little thinking how nearly his prophecy concerning a furnished villa had come true.

"Alas! these young men!" sighs Madame de Camours, glancing at her brother, and inwardly conscious that middle-aged ones were worse.

"Such prospects," chirrupa Mr. Codicil, speculatively, "and such a fatal want of steadiness; his poor father always looked upon him as the apple of his eye, ah! he did indeed."

The sonorous vibration of his own tones is almost too much for Mr. Codicil; how sincerely he prays that the heiress may never be forthcoming can only be known by other fraudulent trustees in a similar position. For he has speculated with and lost just half of the fifty thousand pounds Lord Jasper had bequeathed to his missing child. And he is wondering whether he can recoup the amount by another throw into even deeper waters than the last. For this is the gambler's instinct.

Eustacia is watching the sun-light on the window she fondly fancies had been 'his' and is lost in a maze of dreams. She does not see a white-haired man stare eagerly into her face, so absorbed is she in her dreams.

"I do believe it's the girl," Mr. Codicil mutters to himself, as he returns to his comely housekeeper, and her blushing welcome at Clapham, "that the old jade Mrs. Slater told the truth for perhaps the first time in her life, but Carlton's dead and Slater's in prison, so why stir a muddy pool? Slater may die in prison, she has drunk hard, a stray shot may settle young Jasper, and the memory of the fifty thousand fade out of all their minds. It clearly ought to have been seen into, and taken into court. An uncommonly handsome girl to be sure, and a look of the Fitzmaurice about her too. Bah! This is mawkish rubbish. I'm getting over sensitive. Woe betide you, Catherine," apostrophising his absent housekeeper, "if the salmon and paa are not well boiled, and the claret isn't nicely aired before I swallow them to-night, for I'll give you notice as sure as—"

Mr. Codicil is clearly worried; he is not a courageous man—worried by a remarkable likeness to one of the loveliest women he had ever seen. Suppose he should be called upon to produce the fifty thousand pounds?

Is not a cold and stolid indifference and disregard to the welfare of those confided to our care, as sinful in its way as active evil?

When Eustacia and Madame de Camours return to Grosvenor Square, the count calling at his club and resolutely abandoning the temptation of an evening's tête-à-tête with Eustacia. Mrs. Ruthven is found attired in the tightest sheath of modern costume, turning over the leaves of an album.

"Dearest Anne, delighted to see you," the widow murmurs, after introducing Eustacia;

"so kind of you to call. Is not this heat quite too awful? Nice girl? Oh, very, most amiable and accomplished—finest player to be secured at your price, and I should say, patient in tuition."

Mrs. Ruthven lifts her glass and surveys Eustacia as if she were nearly as interesting an object of scrutiny to the popular intelligence as one of a famous tragedian's pieces of sculpture.

"You are seeking a situation as English governess?"

"Yes, madame."

"Never been out before, I believe. Madame de Camours is, of course, your reference. With regard to terms—well, mine are low—twenty guineas a year, but your youth and inexperience—"

"It will be sufficient," Eustacia answers, certain that Madame de Camours will be intensely irritated at any refusal or hesitation on her part.

"And we start for Paris in two days."

There seems a remote possibility of her meeting Lord Jasper there; she is not thinking of the dole of five pounds a quarter, but of the vague, sweet hope that he may see her again. And the thought fills her with happiness. How tenderly he had spoken to her in the prison! The blank of his absence has brought fever, torment, distraction, but her reason and will sustain her.

Lord Jasper's absence is involved in mystery, and it strikes the girl that they are both the victims of a fatality—dark and incomprehensible. Why has he never appeared since he visited Cumberland?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AFTER TWO YEARS.

And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea;
What are all these kissings worth
If thou kiss not me?

Mrs. RUTHVEN has the very reverse of a meek temper; she changes her servants on the most trivial grounds of complaint: she is formed of that stern stuff which will make a woman a heroine in the eyes of sympathising friends, and a tyrant in those of her dependants.

Whether in the nursery, superintending her children's dresses, or in the kitchen haggling with her cook, Mrs. Ruthven is always majestic, defiant, shrill-voiced and merciless. Not a pleasant woman to live with, so many thoughts, including her husband, who appeared afflicted with being under the painful necessity of constantly resorting to various famous continental springs, where he took his eldest boy, who was weak in the spine and ordered change of air by the family doctor, who pitied Mr. Ruthven.

The new governess finds her pupils as ignorant and well-meaning as it is possible for children to be. Their mother takes very little interest in or notice of them beyond dressing them in correct taste. The two elder girls snub Eustacia whenever a suitable occasion arises, and read French novels with indefatigable zest.

Mrs. Ruthven's house is situated near one of the fashionable faubourgs, and she receives a great deal of company—more, perhaps, when Mr. Ruthven visits the springs than at any other time; unkind people declare that she has been seen smoking wicked little cigarettes, and has flirted desperately at sundry masked balls, and that various fast and highly talented artists, authors, editors and sculptors are invited to the mansion conspicuous for its unrivalled beauty in architecture, of which Mrs. Ruthven is the presiding deity.

She certainly enjoys herself, even if she pays her dependants at as low a rate as they could be procured. Mrs. Ruthven is a patron of the opera, and she sings French chansonnieres in a low thrilling voice that calls for loud admiration, in fact she enjoys the reputation of being a genius; she publishes poems someone else has composed, and offers pictures as her own work which she has purchased of some starveling in

a garret; her ambition is to be famous and admired. A clever French boy has written both the words and music of her last most successful song called "Si je te vois," the profits accruing from which are by no means inconsiderable. Mrs. Ruthven has never particularly liked her new governess. In the first place she is too pretty, and in the second she can never be brought to understand what a very remarkable genius Mrs. Ruthven is.

Eustacia sees through her miserable attempt at art as clearly as she can see through the *blande de perle* and *rouge* on her face. She has lived nearly two years with this "lionne" of Parisian society, doing her best to be brave and cheerful and to learn content, and she has partially succeeded.

Habit soon becomes second nature, and drifting through life in cold and mechanical indifference, she begins to accept the narrow routine of custom as her painful but necessary lot.

Mrs. Ruthven is expecting guests this evening—not the lively, merry Bohemians with their pranks and follies, but several elegant and wealthy ladies of fashion—and she seeks her governess in the school-room to solicit her services on the piano in accompanying their vocal efforts, for although Mrs. Ruthven has, we know, that many-sided genius which forces admiration from the most cynical, she can never read music well at first sight.

It is indeed the case with many rare and splendid souls who have too much passion and depth for mere surface accomplishments.

Eustacia is sitting in a recess of the school-room window, trimming an "Olivia" cap for Mrs. Ruthven with rich crimson satin. Millinery is not included in her salary, but being amiable and sweet-natured, the girl is glad to please her employer by any little unobtrusive services.

"I am expecting some friends this evening," Mrs. Ruthven is saying, fanning herself with the latest novelty in the way of fans that Paris produces—she resembles a sharp pair of scissors sheathed in a tight black velvet case—"and of course you will play for us?"

Eustacia's face brightens, and a faint flush mounts to her cheek.

"I shall be very pleased," she answers, moving one of the crimson bows higher on the cap.

The fantasies of a youthful mind are always evolving surprises and mysteries. Two years is not long enough to kill a great passion. It may "scotch" it, but the embers are all ready to blaze and ignite. The lines of that beloved face rise before her in all their classic chiselling. She has often heard Mrs. Ruthven allude to Lord Jasper as one of those promising young men of fashion and intellect who seem on the point of "drinking themselves to death."

Still Mrs. Ruthven's tongue, like her person, could be very sharp and false as well—particularly false!

But the truth is, Lord Jasper, hearing indirectly of Eustacia's incarceration in the Ruthven mansion, has devoted himself religiously to making violent love to Mrs. Ruthven whenever an opportunity presented itself.

He has bowed very low over her well-powdered bust and shoulders at the opera. He has been at the races in the Bois de Boulogne, looking about for the "lionne," and giving her verses for her songs, in all of which she fondly believes she can trace indistinct homage to herself.

To find a poet attracted by her charms is sufficient to develop wild enthusiasms. She pictures Lord Jasper musing over her eyes and lips and brow with the rapid imagination of a soul pining to find congenial sympathy.

Tighter then must be the velvet sheaths and the skin-astringents, and the newest "corset;" more flowing the Sevigne' curls; more highly-strung her plaintive ballads. Lord Jasper, she has been given to understand, has married the wrong woman and left her long since; it is so pleasant to comfort men who never mention their wives names without shudders of aversion.

Mrs. Ruthven invites Eustacia to partake of

luncheon in her boudoir to-day, a tastefully furnished room hung with blue silk. Here are delicately-scented three-cornered little notes with elaborate coronets and monograms. An impetuous French marquis has made fierce love to Mrs. Ruthven in the vain hope of getting her in his power, borrowing her diamonds and never returning them. He is all heroics and compliments; but her enthusiasm is always well balanced by the acumen of a person of business, and he endeavours to dazzle—but in vain.

Here are also fragments of musical compositions, a guitar, a bouquet of flowers, a good deal of cigar ash, and a large meerschaum pipe. But luncheon now occupies Mrs. Ruthven's attention, and a curried chicken, some first-class Maderia, and the best patisserie are done even more than ample justice to; in fact they must have proved somewhat trying tests to the expansion of the new corset and the elasticity of the velvet sheath into which Mrs. Ruthven appears so nicely stitched.

She descends to take her governess a drive in the Bois after luncheon—she is really useful, and then so cheap. She also appears utterly indifferent about the work, and food, and money she receives, and the apathetic nonchalance of an industrious and intelligent slave is always highly advantageous to an employer's interests. Mrs. Ruthven goes in and out of several first-rate shops, buys a very elegant "visiting chapeau" in the best black chip, lined with amber-tinted faille, sprays of tea-roses on the left side, and black feathers and black strings complete its trimmings; her next purchase is a very killing "robe de chambre" of the palest pink plush embroidered with wreaths of exquisite flowers in the faintest shades of silk. She also orders a quiet dinner dress of wheat-coloured silk trimmed with richest Brussels lace, the bodice and paniers in black satin embroidered with wheat-ears and tiny field flowers.

These purchases satisfactorily effected, Mrs. Ruthven returns home and prepares to receive her guests in the drawing-room. Eustacia is glad to find herself in her quiet little bedroom, her head aches, partly from Mrs. Ruthven's volubility, and partly from the dazzling rays of the July sun.

She takes from her cupboard a soft Indian cashmere dress made by herself in her spare time, which is generally late at night after the household has retired to rest; the skirt sweeps the ground and is draped with Louis Quinze paniers of figured velvet, it is a pretty and tasteful costume, and suits her supple figure; it is finished with a high ruffle and ruby-coloured ribbons, and perhaps Mrs. Ruthven in her dress of rose-coloured satin, considerably décolleté, so that one thinks of the soft aid of tulle illusion as a very suitable veil to the powdered neck, with a consciousness that it would have greatly enhanced the general effect—does not appear to be the best advantage to-night."

"Play something soft and quiet to begin with," she whispers to Eustacia as she waves her to the piano, "and don't thump the chords when you accompany me." Commands which were necessary, seeing that chords had a trick of drowning the kittenish pipings of the thrilling voice which sent her guests into ecstasies.

Eustacia plays on dreamily, no one takes any especial notice of her. A duchess remarks that she seems very nicely-dressed and lady-like, little aware of the pent-up emotion in the breast of the girl in the gloomy corner of the drawing-room, and that there is material for a dozen tragédie in the rebellion and suffering of her spirit.

"Do pray sing for us, dear Mrs. Ruthven," an amiable little artist, a Mr. D'Alemon Broome, is saying, bending over his hostess with affectionate effusion.

"Oh, do I!" is re-echoed in the semi-circle. Eustacia leaves off playing and looks over Mrs. Ruthven's songs; there is a new glitter in the thoughtful eyes that of late have lost their brilliancy.

But Mrs. Ruthven is clearly anxious not to sing just yet, she wishes her best effort in "Bravura" to be made later in the evening. Hereupon rises a sulky young lady in black satin, and volun-

teers to sing; she also has been entreated, if not too fatigued, to be so kind as to contribute the exquisite finish of her vocal powers for the general enjoyment of everybody. If it has been the misfortune of the reader to be too close to a dulcimer badly played, he will understand how intensely the enjoyment of everybody must have been increased as the exquisite finish pierced the cerebral organs of Mrs. Ruthven's guests.

Eustacia resigns her seat at the piano, and, being sent by Mrs. Ruthven to fetch an opera cloak, pauses on the stairs to listen, for a well-known voice is reaching her ears, neutralising the effect of the metallic dulcimer-like strains in the drawing-room. She knows it is Lord Jasper who has arrived, she sees the dark fur-lined cloak in the hall—Lord Jasper, who has never heard of or seen her since they parted in the prison. And she stands petrified on the stairs, waiting for his approach.

He sees her in an instant. The rays through the stained glass windows light up her glorious loveliness, and reflect a beauty full of statuesque, yet warm-breathing vitality. She forgets her position to so great an extent as to descend at once into the hall. She could not control her agitation were they to have met face to face in Mrs. Ruthven's drawing-room, but alone with him, she fancies she can regain temporary calmness. Before she can utter a word, Lord Jasper draws her into the dining-room, where a costly supper is prepared, and where, also, at any inopportune moment, Mrs. Ruthven may descend.

"Eustacia, dearest, I know that I should find you here, and now what have you to say to me?"

So near him again—his breath mingling with hers, his breast agitated as her own.

"You left me to die in the prison, my lord. You went away and never returned. I have nothing more to say—let deeds speak for themselves."

Lord Jasper flings himself into one of the easy arm-chairs by the hearth.

"Now, you are unjust, Eustacia. Let me at least have time to say a few words in my own defence."

Perhaps she has already forgiven him all. The intense delight of seeing him again has a fascination which makes her grateful and enraptured. But alas! there is active little Mrs. Ruthven in the drawing-room muttering:

"Where can that girl have gone, all this long time? Chilly? Yes, of course it's chilly. Dear Lady Musgrave, try a cup of coffee. Alice!—to her daughter—ring the bell at once."

"When I left you in the prison I sought your father, the Count de Remolles." Lord Jasper hesitates here, and the colour dyes his cheeks anew. "He refused to save you. I grew angry, and insulted him, and we quarrelled. The consequence was, a duel. It was my hand that was instrumental in his death!"

Eustacia utters a sharp and terrible cry.

"You!—you killed the Count de Remolles?"

Who is this slowly descending the stairs and now standing at the half-closed door but the irresistible Mrs. Ruthven listening to every word? But there has been a long interval of silence since Eustacia has last spoken. She only weeps silently.

"Now you know why I had to leave England and could not say farewell to you. But I wrote to you, darling, saying how imperative my absence had become."

She listens mechanically, her bosom heaving with unutterable emotion.

"I will tell you all the sad and tragic particulars of our quarrel some other time. Just now I long to fold you in my arms—to kiss away your tears."

But Mrs. Ruthven, in her rose-coloured silk, glides into the room like an infuriated Pythoness.

"Lord Jasper Fitzmaurice!" she cries, reaching out her hand, "what you may be pleased to call a flirtation may strike you as a very ordinary affair—and when you meet a forward girl I can understand you will amuse yourself; but as for you, Miss Leslie, out of my house you go this very hour. Kissing in his arms! Pheugh!—horrible! I have no words to express my dis-

gust and contempt for your unwomanly conduct! Contaminate my girls! Never!—never more!"

Mrs. Ruthven shrieks out this last "never more" with the same powerful emphasis with which the Raven in Edgar Poe's poem may have answered the unhappy student's query regarding the lost Lenore.

Two angry spots of colour glow on her carefully enamelled face. Lord Jasper, whom she believed adored her, and wrote lyrics in which "thee" and "thine" were beautifully interwoven in careful Alexandrine measure, caught with a governess in his arms!

Lord Jasper laughs a little under his breath, and rises from his seat. Eustacia has the luxury of seeing the evident chagrin of Mrs. Ruthven change into quick surprise.

"My dear madame, it is no flirtation, I assure you. I am anxious to marry your governess—make her Lady Fitzmaurice to-morrow if she will so far honour me by accepting my hand."

"You will positively marry her, my lord?"

"If she will have me—most positively and decidedly; once more—yes!"

"Madness! Insanity! It is quite too absurd. This is carrying chivalry—ahem!—much too far."

Eustacia's hand is now trembling in his; the distressed look of shame, indignation and despair have faded.

"Make that girl your wife, my lord?"

"Why, I've been seeking her these two long years. We've been engaged, you know, and—aw—that sort of thing," his lordship hastens to explain; "but Miss Leslie changed her mind."

"Sly cat," mutters Mrs. Ruthven, who finds now what Lord Jasper's motives were in seeking her society.

"Will you not continue your kind hospitality a little longer to my promised wife?" Lord Jasper asks with his winning smile addressing the woman who would now ever be his lasting and remorseless enemy.

Mrs. Ruthven bows a cold assent, and after a few irrelevant questions have been answered, rises and leaves them alone. Mrs. Ruthven pants, palpitates, nearly sobs, but does not go into hysterics at so unseasonable an hour. What of the guests in the drawing-room, above all, Mr. D'Alençon Broome, the celebrated landscape painter whose nod is respected even in the great salons, and who can kill a reputation with a shrug?

Are there no martyrs in first-class society whose lives are one long repression? Mrs. Ruthven could gambol merrily on occasions, but the present is bitter. To have been deceived by a man so highly-gifted, whilst the time was in love with her governess! It necessitated two glasses of champagne. Mrs. Ruthven, re-invigorated by the sparkling beverage, returns to her drawing-room apologising sweetly for her absence. Mr. D'Alençon Broome is singing "Take back the heart that thou gavest" as if the siren in black satin who is still sulky could fathom the anguish of the neat, dapper little gentleman, who was so great in landscape paintings, and so small in his dress clothes.

Lord Jasper turns to Eustacia and draws her once more to his heart.

"So you see, dearest, I did not give you the chance of a refusal; it's all settled and we must return to England to-morrow. I can't live without you. You shall be my wife."

"Your wife?" repeats Eustacia, once more in his arms, her brain throbbing with delirious joy.

"Yes, my own darling. Are you not just a little tired of your lonely, weary life?"

(To be Continued.)

THE HONEY BEE.

The honey bee is an inflammable critter, sudden in his impressions and hasty in his conclusions, or end. His natural disposishun is a

warm cross between red pepper in the pod and fusil oil, and his moral. bliss iz "get out of mi way." They have a lang boddy, divided in the middle of a waist spot, but their physikal importance lies at the terminus, in the shape of a javelin; it iz always loaded, and enters a man as still as a thought, as spry as litenin', and as full oph melanolly az the toothake. Bees never argy a case; they settle awl ov their differences of opinyun bi lettin' their javelin fly, and are az certain to hit as a mule is. Bees are not long lived—I can't state jist how long their lives are, but I know from instinkt and observashun, that eny kritter, be he bug or be he devil, who iz mad all the time and stings every good chance he kan git, generally dies early.

CLARA LORRAINE;

—OR—

THE LUCKY TOKEN.

CHAPTER VI.

"MAMMA," continued Mabel, "it seems that this demure Clara has other acquaintances in town besides ourselves, and in a most scandalous manner she has been out meeting them!"

"What are you talking about?" said Mrs. Lorraine, turning from her husband and looking at the other members of her family circle.

"I was saying that Clara here has done a most imprudent thing. She pretended to go out for a walk this afternoon, but instead she had an appointment with—"

"It is not true!" interrupted Clara, dismayed at the great matter which a little fire had kindled. "I will myself explain the affair, aunt. I indeed went out for a walk, but I wandered farther than I intended, and, in the crowd, got so bewildered that I did not know which way to turn to come home. I asked a gentleman to direct me, and, as he was coming in the same direction, he walked with me as far as the door. This is the whole of the matter, and if more is made of it, I can only assure you that I have been entirely innocent of any wrong intent."

Mrs. Lorraine frowned.

"Your story seems scarcely probable," she coldly replied. "It sounds very much like a preconcerted arrangement. Your own conscious blushes betray you."

"I blush because I am wrongfully accused," Clara steadily replied. "My word has never before been doubted."

"Yet you were very quick to doubt and deny my daughter's word. What is the name of the gentleman who you thus met?"

"I do not know," the young girl replied, looking down upon her plate with a sad, troubled countenance, which, by her accusers, was mistaken for guilt.

"It was Mr. Earnshaw, mamma!" cried Mabel. "Lina has his card."

It was now Mrs. Lorraine's turn to flush. The name was that of the gentleman upon whom, as she hinted to her daughter that afternoon, she "had designs."

"Lina," she said, turning to her youngest child, "where is the card? Give it to me."

Lina with alacrity jumped down from her chair and began searching for the proof of Clara's guilt.

"Here it is," said Mabel, plucking it from a fold of her sister's dress. "Robert L. Earnshaw," and she passed the card across the table to her mother.

The luckless orphan, to whom all this would have seemed a farce, could she have looked upon it dispassionately, sat silent and distressed, for she dimly perceived that in some way she had grossly offended her relatives.

"Lina, how did you come by this?" demanded Mrs. Lorraine.

"Clara dropped it in the hall when she came in," the child answered.

"How did you come by it?" she judicially asked, turning to Clara.

"I know. I can tell all about it," interrupted Lina.

Mrs. Lorraine turned to the forward child as though her testimony was of more worth than that of the supposed culprit.

Lina proceeded:

"I was at the parlour window and saw them both. They stood talking and laughing as if they didn't want to say good-bye, and then the gentleman gave Clara the card, and when she came in he stood on the pavement looking after her, and when I came out into the hall and said I'd tell on her she dropped the card, she was so frightened, and ran off upstairs."

"Lina! Lina!" cried Clara. "How can you tell such falsehoods?"

"You did run—you know you did! I told you he was one of Mab's beaux, and Mab would be mad; but you said you didn't care whether I told or not."

"Neither should I care if you would tell the simple truth," returned the persecuted girl; "but it is very naughty in you to tell things differently than they happened."

Mrs. Lorraine put forth her hand impressively as she said with freezing dignity:

"Clara, when I am present I choose to correct my own children. I never allow any interference in such matters. Lina's story is so straightforward that I cannot doubt its truth. Mr. Lorraine," she continued, turning to her husband, who had thus far taken no part in the discussion, "you see what has been going on. Already our dignity has been compromised. It strikes me that you are the proper person to decide upon what shall be done in this matter."

Mr. Lorraine looked at his niece and then at his wife.

"Well, really, Eugenia," he said, "I cannot see that any great harm has been done. Earnshaw is a fine, honourable young fellow whom any girl would like for an escort home, and if Clara and he had never met before it was no more than civil in him to give her his card."

"Never met before!" echoed Mrs. Lorraine. "Then you refuse to believe that their meeting was a preconcerted affair?"

"I don't see very well how it could have been, for Clara has only been in the city about twenty-four hours."

"Were it not for the presence of our daughters, Alfred, I might recall to your mind certain facts which you seem determined to ignore."

Mrs. Lorraine signed to the younger members of the party to withdraw. Mabel and Lina reluctantly and so tardily obeyed that their mother was obliged to emphasise her command by an emphatic dismissal; but Clara, wounded and indignant, had risen before the order was given, and was at the door of the dining-room before the others turned from the table.

"Mr. Lorraine," said his wife, when the two found themselves alone, "it is very strange that you cannot see in this matter, which to you seems so trivial, a subject for serious alarm."

Mr. Lorraine laughed.

"Of alarm, Eugenia? Upon my word I am mystified by your fears. Had Mabel, now, walked a mile or two with Earnshaw, quite a different tune would have been sung. For my part I can't see but that Clara is just as creditable a companion as Mab, and I guess most young fellows in their senses would think the same thing."

Mrs. Lorraine bit her lip to keep down her rising anger, for her husband had carelessly touched upon the very thought which occupied her mind.

"You are quite right, Alfred. It would indeed have been a far different affair if Mabel had been the one to walk with Mr. Earnshaw

instead of Clara. A father," and she laid sarcastic stress upon the word—"a father may be so occupied with worldly cares and pleasures that he has no time to think of the future of his children, but a mother is never so selfishly absorbed."

Mr. Lorraine raised his eyebrows incredulously, but said nothing. His wife went on:

"As a mother my partiality for my children may be great, but it does not blind me to the fact that securing happy futures for them, foresight and some degree of management are necessary."

"Pray, Eugenia, shorten this virtuous maternal prelude and let me know at once what you are coming at," said Mr. Lorraine, impatiently. "In what way can I assist you in securing the future happiness of the girls? Just name the way and I'll lend a hearty, helping hand."

Mrs. Lorraine frowned.

"Have you yet thought," she said, "that Mabel has reached an age when girls in her position are apt to form attachments and engagements for life?"

"Girls of nineteen or twenty certainly do form such ties," her husband assented.

"It may not have occurred to you," continued the lady, "that a girl of Mabel's prospects is naturally an object toward which the eyes of fortune seekers may turn."

"That is very true."

"Such a person is already seeking her hand," said Mrs. Lorraine, emphatically.

"How you shock me!" ejaculated the other, honestly startled. "Tell me his name and I'll forbid him the house at once!"

"It cannot be done, for the gentleman to whom I allude is Mr. Langton."

"I have no fear whatever of Mr. Langton," answered Mr. Lorraine, boldly. "I'd as soon tell him as many a better man that I have no daughters to marry off to jockeys and gamblers."

"I tell you again, Alfred, no open disrespect must be shown Mr. Langton."

"Why not, pray?"

"Because he is Mrs. Grahame's favourite nephew, and any slight to him would mortally offend her."

"What do I care for Mrs. Grahame any more than for her nephew?"

"You may care nothing for her, but I care a great deal; not, indeed, so much for the lady herself as because she is the leader of our 'set', and to offend her would be to embroil myself in difficulties with all the ladies whom I am the most desirous of visiting. Her husband, too, has political influence which I hardly think you would care to forfeit."

Mr. Lorraine pursed up his lips.

"It takes you women to see all sides of a question," he said. "But what has all this to do with Earnshaw and Clara? If Langton is determined to marry Mabel for her money, and we dare not tell him he shan't, I don't see how we are to help ourselves."

"Men never do see anything worth seeing in such cases," retorted Mrs. Lorraine, contemptuously.

"What do you propose, Eugenia? Tell me, and I'll look at it with all my eyes, or with a microscope, if necessary."

"Well, then, can't you see that the better, the safer, and by far the pleasanter way would be for us to interest Mabel in some other person?"

"There is not a doubt of it, my dear."

Mrs. Lorraine proceeded:

"Some person as handsome and as attractive as Mr. Langton, but more pleasing to us. Some one as well connected, but of better habits and prospects, and one whose fortune is already so large as to make him, in a manner, indifferent to hers."

"Where will you find such a paragon?"

"Mr. Earnshaw is such a person."

Mr. Lorraine thought a moment.

"You are right," he said, more seriously than he had yet spoken. "Earnshaw is a good fellow, of irreproachable habits, handsome, talented, and rich enough to snap his fingers, as

one might say, at any marriage portion that Mab might bring him. By all means let her marry Earnshaw instead of Langton."

"Easier said than done, Mr. Lorraine. Mabel, as you know, is not distinguished for her beauty, neither does she possess the engaging manners which would be the most likely to attract a person like Mr. Earnshaw."

"The gentleman opened his eyes.

"For an affectionate, solicitous mother it seems to me that you are a very impartial one," he said.

His wife did not heed the interruption.

"Mabel's passion for saying rude things runs away with her sense sometimes, and I tremble when Mr. Earnshaw is by, lest she may say or do something to disgust him. Yet for all that, I'm determined to bring about a match between them."

"If you are determined upon it, it will undoubtedly be done, Eugenia."

"Thank you, Alfred. Your compliment is a very pretty acknowledgment of my perseverance and ability, but I cannot carry my point if you persist in thwarting me."

"I thwart you?" exclaimed Mr. Lorraine.

"You thwart me by upholding Clara in her improper behaviour," retorted his wife, with flashing eyes.

"How under the sun has Clara anything to do with it?"

"Mr. Lorraine, a bat could hardly be more blind than you are at times! I can see it, if you cannot, that Clara, with all her contrived dress and manner, is much more attractive than Mabel. You intimated as much yourself not five minutes ago."

"Did I, my dear?"

"Yes, when you said that any sensible young man would as soon walk a square with Clara as with your daughter. That is just the point I'm arriving at. If Mr. Earnshaw has met Clara, he is undoubtedly pleased with her, else he would not have lingered at the door and left her his card, as if he wished to continue the acquaintance. In calling to see Mabel he runs the risk of meeting Clara, and, therefore, I say our plans for securing our child's future may be defeated."

Mr. Lorraine listened to this lucid exposition of the state of affairs with perplexity.

"Well, what shall be done?" he said, after a few moments' pause.

"Things were going well enough before Clara came into the family," replied his wife. "We must send her away. Let her go to some boarding-school for a few years until Mabel is settled."

"It cannot be done," said Mr. Lorraine, decidedly. "I have reasons of my own for keeping Clara under my own eye. I don't wish her to be running about the world making all sorts of acquaintances, and having nobody knows what kind of ideas put into her head."

"Send her to a convent, then. There she would be safe enough."

"She is safer with me," returned the gentleman, shaking his head. "It would have been better if I had had her months ago."

"Months ago? Her mother was living then, was she not?"

"Certainly; but I have reasons to believe that ill-health made her mother an unsuitable companion. They should have been separated before her death."

The shadow of that anxious frown again settled upon Mr. Lorraine's face, but his wife was too much engrossed by her own thoughts to notice it.

"Then for the sake of this girl will you cast your own child into the very jaws of this fortune-hunting Langton?" she angrily said.

"You speak of Mrs. Grahame's favourite nephew as though he were a wild animal. Mabel has a fair enough chance to try her luck with Earnshaw. Let her keep her hair smooth and leave off pulling that idiot fringe down over her forehead; let her learn to be less spiteful and selfish and she'll come around all right on the marrying question."

"Mr. Lorraine, you seem to have forgotten that Mabel inherited her disposition."

Mr. Lorraine opened his lips to retort, but thought better of it and remained silent.

"Am I to understand, Alfred, that you refuse to exert your influence in this matter?"

"You are certainly to understand that I refuse to have Clara sent away. It is most essential, Eugenia, that she remain under my roof."

"Remain, I suppose, to be a foil to your children and an object of mortification to your wife."

"Dress her up handsomely and she need be no mortification to you. I have commissioned Mabel to get her everything she needs, and if the money doesn't hold out, let me know and I'll furnish more."

He left the room and his wife remained sitting speechless with wrath.

She had laid before her husband one of the most cherished plans of her heart—one, indeed, by which she set greater store than she had confessed to him. She did not mention, when enumerating the advantages of a handsome settlement for her daughter, that by her marriage she would herself be relieved of a social incubus.

Vain, selfish, and as fond of admiration as a young girl, it galled her to be pointed out as the mother of a young lady who had already been in society three winters. She kept Mabel in the background as long as she could, but at last she was forced to introduce her to the world, and ever since then, she imagined, her own successes had diminished.

Besides, as before intimated, her eldest daughter's plain looks offended her mother's fastidious tastes. She professed for her deep maternal solicitude, but in her heart she wished for the time to come when she would be relieved of her constant companionship.

But this desire was not so great as to induce her to accept the first opportunity that offered, else she would have encouraged the advances of Mr. Langton.

An impecunious, extravagant son-in-law was not to Mrs. Lorraine's mind. Her own tastes were too expensive, and she was not willing to imperil their gratification. Mabel should marry a man who would himself be abundantly able to supply all her extravagant wants.

A married daughter dependent upon the paternal purse she would not allow. Mr. Earnshaw possessed every qualification for a desirable son-in-law, and the managing woman of society long since determined that he should fall a victim to her wiles.

With that purpose in view she had planned card parties, balls and musicales, at such times contriving to throw her daughter and the young man as much as possible together without too plainly betraying her intentions.

She sounded Mabel's praises in his ears; she made herself as agreeable as though she were the one soliciting his liking; in a word, she did everything which the ingenuity of a managing mother could suggest.

"And now," she thought, as she made a mental review of her late efforts—"now, everything is to be defeated by this interloping girl! By what strange chance did she meet Earnshaw to-day? Of course, such a man would be attracted by her smooth baby face and simpering manners. I wonder," she pondered—"I wonder if I could drop one or two judicious hints so skilfully that he would not care to continue the acquaintance."

And the cruel, unscrupulous woman turned over in her mind many plans by which she might cast cowardly aspersions upon the fair name of the helpless orphan.

Yet from this alternative Mrs. Lorraine shrank as from ground too dangerous for her to set foot upon; not, indeed, because of any tender feeling for the girl, or from any upright sentiment, but because she remembered the clear-eyed, straightforward glance of Earnshaw and feared that that glance would detect the falsehood as it was uttered.

The only safe plan, she finally resolved, would be to keep Clara from again crossing the young

man's path; but how was this to be accomplished? In Mrs. Lorraine's heart there lay coiled an impulse of which murderers are made.

Jealousy of her husband's partiality for the girl, an unreasoning dislike and a dread of her influence upon others, combined to awaken the wish that the girl were dead and utterly removed from her way. But let it not be supposed that any remote thought of a bloody deed was harboured in the ambitious woman's mind. What she wished might occur was as yet unconnected with the idea of planning its accomplishment.

While she thus sat and pondered, frowning gloomily at the rich silver coffee service before her, she was unaware of the flight of time as well as of other matters over which she claimed to exercise a mother's supervision.

The obnoxious Mr. Langton was even then sitting at his ease in her luxurious drawing-room, and with the arts of a designing man of the world was rapidly winning his way to the heart of the wayward Mabel.

His dashing style was one well calculated to catch the not too delicate fancy of the young lady; his flippant speech, interlarded with slang expressions, his vapid jokes and his boastful sneers at religion and all orderly observances, were received by Mabel as evidences of a superior nature.

Two hours before she had been made furiously jealous that the despised country cousin should have dared raise her eyes to one of her favoured circle, and at that moment she would have declared her preference for Earnshaw if only for the selfish purpose of keeping him from another, but now all such thoughts were effaced from her mind by Langton's fascinations.

As was her custom when a visitor was announced, Lina had ensconced herself upon a sofa in the drawing-room, determined to be present and to glean any scrap of conversation which she might make useful in future scenes; but at a command from Mabel, she was seized by John, the servant, and despite her cries and struggles was taken from the room.

After this expulsion she sought amusement elsewhere, and as her bed-time was a sort of "moveable feast" controlled by no other law than her own inclination, she betook herself of the dining-room and of her dismissal from the paternal conference.

This recollection acted as oil upon troubled waters, and drying her eyes she stole softly to the dining-room door. She slyly applied her eye to the keyhole, and seeing both her father and mother were seated at the table engaged in animated conversation, she turned her ear toward the door and listened with all the eagerness of a precocious, meddlesome child.

With keen delight she heard her mother explain the designs she cherished concerning her sister Mabel and Earnshaw. She heard Langton denounced as a fortune-hunter, and though the word was not clearly comprehended it was treasured for future definition. She heard, too, her mother express her fears of Clara's influence and demand her removal to some distant school, as well as her father's decided refusal.

His voice, louder in tone than her mother's, carried its meaning more perfectly to the listener's ear, and thereby the sharp-witted child plainly gathered that though Clara's presence might not be wholly desired by even her father, there was some powerful reason which caused him to refuse to allow her to leave; and this, too, she laid up for future explanation, for even in her juvenile experience it was a new thing for her father to do anything he did not wish to do.

So intent was the child upon laying up an ample stock of mischief that she did not hear Mr. Lorraine when he crossed the dining-room to leave it.

He opened and shut the door quickly, doing which he stumbled against his youngest child crouched upon the threshold.

"How now, Lina!" he exclaimed. "Listening at the door?"

He took her by the arm with a severe grip and was leading her to the library for well-deserved punishment, when she cried out:

"I wasn't listening, papa! I was only just sitting there on the rug waiting for you to come out."

Mr. Lorraine relaxed his hold upon the child's arm, when she pulled herself altogether away from his grasp.

"You've pinched my arm and made it black and blue!" she exclaimed, glaring angrily at her father and rubbing the twinge member. "I never saw anything like it! Mamma sends me away from the table before I've got through eating my dinner, and Mab puts me out of the parlour every time Mr. Langton calls, and I get pinched and pulled if I wait for a chance to speak to you!" and putting her knuckles to her eyes, Lina, by a great effort, managed to squeeze out a few tears.

"Well, well, Lina, don't cry," said Mr. Lorraine, soothingly. "Perhaps I was mistaken. Here's some money for you," and he put a number of silver coins into the little girl's hand.

Lina looked at the money and counted it before she relinquished her final, long-drawn sob.

"There," said her father, "doesn't that pay you for a little harmless pinching?" But what was it you wanted to say to me?"

"I wanted to tell you about Mab."

"What about Mab?"

"She promised me her new fan if I would tell her something, and I told her, and now she says she took the fan back to the shop, and I know she didn't, for I smelt it this afternoon in her bureau-drawer."

"Smelt it, Lina?"

"Yes. She keeps her bureau-drawers locked now, but I know I smelt the fan; for there's something on it different from anything else I ever smelt before."

"You and Mabel must settle your own quarrels," said Mr. Lorraine, turning indifferently away, with never a thought of the duty a parent owes his children as judge and arbiter of their disputes.

"Lina called after him:

"Ain't you going to send Mr. Langton away?"

As she spoke, Mr. Langton, accompanied by Mabel, came out of the drawing-room. Lina, expecting to see her sister's unkindness to herself now amply avenged, awaited the result of the meeting with malicious pleasure.

Her words had been heard by Mr. Langton himself, and that astute schemer, who already suspected the estimation in which he was held by the elders of the Lorraine family, braced himself for a disagreeable encounter.

Mr. Lorraine, however, greeted the young man with civility, and after the interchange of a few courteous commonplaces, went on his way.

Lina stood regarding the scene with open-eyed wonder, and a new lesson in worldly wisdom dawned upon her mind.

"Papa don't want to do it!" she thought. "No, he wants to do it, but he doesn't dare! I'll go downstairs and buy a cigarette from James."

Below stairs the moral atmosphere and tone of talk was as unfit for a child's ears as that which prevailed above.

John, the footman, was relating the incidents of a successful flirtation which he was carrying on with a chamber-maid next door, while Cécile, in an undertone, was gratifying the cook by some gossip from the upper regions of the house.

Lina stole up to this latter pair and readily took in the subject of their talk, for Cécile took no pains to prevent her hearing what she had to say. The cook, indeed, looked up and said:

"Now you go way, Lina. You're always coming round where you're not wanted, and listening to things, and then going off and telling 'em to somebody."

"I ain't, either," retorted Lina. "I've just as good a right here as you have and better too, and if I can't stay I'll tell mamma about the brandy."

The cook said no more and Cécile proceeded: "It's plain enough to be seen, too, that she is poor as—as what you call church rat, for I steal into her chambre this afternoon when she was gone out, and look in her trunk, and, ah, such a sight!"

The maid held up her hands and rolled up her eyes.

"As truly as you are sitting there, I only count two robes and one poor gown, with a trimming the most abominable you ever did see. What dat demoiselle did tink to come to one house like this with a wardrobe so poor, I know not."

"Did she have any jewellery, or any ribbons and laces, such as Miss Mabel has?" asked the cook.

"Well, notink—absolutment notink. She had got a leetle old box with some beets ribbon and such tings, but not wat you and I should wear. And should you ver' much weesh to know what she have in the bottom of her trunk?"

"Yes, replied the cook, eagerly, for Cécile's tone was calculated to convey the impression of some mysterious discovery.

"One old horseshoe of iron," said the maid, contemptuously.

The cook burst into a loud, coarse laugh.

"Is she going to turn blacksmith?" she asked, and has she brought a horseshoe from the country for a pattern? Sure, Mr. Lorraine must have been out of his senses when he brought such a creature to the house. I'll give her to understand the first chance I get that she needn't expect anything from me. Not even a cup of tea will I make her if I can help it. I've got enough to do without having such trash to look after."

"And not one stitch shall madame cause me to take for her," echoed Cécile. "Ver' soon she will say, 'I must have new robes and mantles'; but will say, 'I have already too much stitches to make. I will never, no never, take stitches for the seconde classe!'"

Thus the two women talked on, and the child listened until sleep overcame her, when her head dropped on Cécile's shoulder, and the maid, with an imprecation softened to Irish ears by its French dress, took the neglected, sleeping child in her arms and bore her to bed.

(To be Continued.)

CHRISTIAN NAMES.

In the days of our fore-fathers, men and women bore names compounded from words having a common significance in the language of the day. Such names, in our own time, as those of Mercy, Charity, or Patience; and to a less degree Ernest, Clement or Blanche. But most of our common designations to-day at once show their foreign origin by the fact that they convey no meaning to us as they stand. In early English times, however, before the Dane and the Norwegian from Scandinavian lands, or the Norman (a Scandinavian with a Jaeger of Roman civilization) had overflowed the country, every English man or woman bore a name which at once conveyed a meaning to the hearer in his own tongue. Few of these names survived through the middle ages, and our whole modern nomenclature is either foreign or scriptural.

HAIR AT A PREMIUM.

A CHARMING story of a hair has recently been told as having occurred at Vienna. A poor girl with beautiful hair went to a barber to sell it. He tried to make a close bargain, saying hair was plentiful this year, and declared he could only give her eight florins. The little maiden's eyes filled with tears, and she hesitated for a moment while threading her fingers through her chestnut locks. Finally she threw herself into a chair and said, "Then take it quickly."

The barber was about to cut off the fair tresses, when a gentleman sitting in one of the chairs interrupted him, and spoke to the girl. "My child," said he, "why do you sell your beautiful hair?" "My mother has been nearly five months ill. I cannot work enough to support us. Everything has been sold or pawned, and there is not a penny in the house."

"No, no, my child; if that is the case I will buy your hair, and give one hundred florins for it." He gave the girl the note, the sight of which dried her tears, and he took up the barber's shears. Taking the locks in his hand he selected the longest hair, cut it off, and put it carefully in his pocket-book, thus paying one hundred florins for a single hair. He took the poor girl's address, in case he should want to buy another at the same rate.

MR. GUNNER'S FORTUNES.

"I COULD wish," said Mr. Gunner, casting a rather disconsolate glance about the dreary waste of garret, "that my apartments were not so vast as to length, and the frescoed ceiling (frescoed with cobwebs) a trifle loftier. I might add that it would be more conducive to my comfort were the lace-draped, oriel windows not so entirely guillies of glass. However, with this velvet-piled floor, glowing grate and kindly spread, I'll not complain."

He drew his broken chair towards the rickety table, and peered into the murky depths of his coffee-cup.

"Ah! how the glowing wine sparkles in the crystal goblets, wooing me to propose a toast!"

He lifted his cracked cup on high, with a grand tragedy flourish.

"Your majesty's health!" waving his hand condescendingly towards imaginary royalty. "Long may you live, and happy may you be in this flowery vale of gladness! I—"

Just then Mr. Gunner's eye lighted on a sandwich lying alone on a cracked plate, and in his haste to despatch it from this flowery vale of gladness, he forgot all about his highness' toast, and began his supper rather hungrily, indulging in no more private theatricals until everything eatable had disappeared, and a servant girl came in to clear away the dishes, of which there was not a very great variety.

"Tillah," then said Mr. Gunner, standing with his back to the empty grate, and flourishing his toothpick as though he felt very comfortable indeed in the warm glow of last week's ashes, "Tillah, my dear—or, as I see by the proud lifting of that queenly head that the terms are too familiar, I will say Miss Jinks—I—"

"Umph! you feel mighty sharp now, I suppose," said Miss Jinks, tossing her not over-smooth head, "with your highfalutin language. But my name is Tilly Jinks, and you can't make it anything else, with all your palaverin."

"What! Tillah, can't I make it Gunner?" asked the young man, slyly.

Miss Jinks gathered up the dishes sharply, and bounced towards the door.

"Oh, Tillah, Tillah, Tillah!" cried Mr. Gunner, pathetically, as she disappeared. Then, turning his eyes to the frescoed ceiling, he continued, "Even sweet Tillah deserts me now. First my dear friend Jim refuses to lend me a stray X, or even a paltry V, under the flimsy pretext that I haven't repaid the last five loans. Oh, friendship, thou'rt a fraud! Then my tailor refuses to turn me out a new suit, or even a waistcoat, and the restaurant man will never trust me for another meal. I've come to dry sandwiches, muddy coffee and rusty garments. Alas! such is life."

Mr. Gunner looked reproachfully at the empty grate a moment, and then, brightening, said:

"Well, well, I'll set the chandelier aglow to cheer my gloomy fancy, and take a reverie beside the cheerful fire, while the wind howls without."

He fished a match out of his pocket, and, lighting a sputtering tallow candle, set it on the table. Then strolling to the "lace-draped,

oriel window," he looked out a while on the gloomy night. But the cold wind soon drove him back to his chair, where he sat gazing at the dim, struggling light shivering.

"They say the darkest hour is just before the dawn," he soliloquised, yawning. "I'll go to sleep, and wait for the dawn to arrive."

* * * * *

"A dissipated spendthrift, is he? Well, he is the man I want. Is this his room?"

"Yes, sir; this is it, sir, and he's own' the rent for it, too, the good-for-nothing, shiftless fellow!"

Mr. Gunner started from his doze and rubbed his eyes, as the harsh tones of his landlady fell on his ears just outside the door. Sure enough he was owing rent, and had not a penny to pay it. But listen!

"Owing the rent, is he? Well, I am his agent, and will pay you now, so that you need not trouble him with such trifles. He is well able to pay for all the accommodations you can give him, so rest easy."

The object of these remarks stared at his flickering candle in bewilderment, and then attempted to stir the fire. This fruitless effort convinced him he was not dreaming. But who was this outside his door, declaring himself to be his agent and clinking money into the stern landlady's hand, softening her to ejaculations and smiles?

A few more words were exchanged, and there was a tap at the door. Mr. Gunner sat quite still, staring at the candle. Then a tall figure pushed the door open and strode in, looking at him in the uncertain light.

"Do I address Samuel Gunner?" inquired this phantom, in a gruff voice.

Mr. Gunner was not sure whether he was himself or someone else, but he managed to convey to his visitor—or visitor, as he was inclined to believe—the information that he had hitherto considered himself as Mr. Samuel Gunner. He also invited him to sit down.

"No," said the man, "my business is soon done. I am here to herald a change of fortune for you, and warn you that your mode of living must be altered. You appear to be rather destitute at present, but that is now past. You are expected to become a member of good society, and take up your abode in a place worthy your altered circumstances."

Mr. Gunner, who had been standing, now sank into his chair as if beneath the weight of these words.

"You shall want for nothing," continued the mysterious being, "so long as you pursue a course satisfactory to your benefactor. Are you in love with any woman?"

Samuel shook his head for answer. He was speechless.

"That is good. You are required to make the acquaintance, with a view to matrimony, of this young lady," and he threw a small, elegant card on the table.

Samuel did not glance at this, but, rousing himself by a tremendous effort, gasped:

"What does all this mean?"

"Sir, you are to ask no questions. When you require money, present your cheque for any reasonable amount to Slinker and Brother. You are restricted in nothing, so proceed to enjoy yourself. Good-night."

Samuel did not attempt to detain him, but, after he was gone, got into bed, thinking this was a new style of dream. When the grey light of morning crept through his dirty window he made no attempt to rise, but lay with his eyes fixed on the blackened ceiling, pondering over his dream.

He was in no hurry to rise, for it was nipping cold, and even black coffee and transparently thin sandwiches were not forthcoming this morning. However, he could not lie always, so he finally arose, shivering, and proceeded to look on his table, where lay the bit of pasteboard.

"Why this dream has produced a real, true, substantial card," he soliloquised; "and here is a name—'Miss Viola Colhill.' Now I wonder

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[THE SMILES OF FATE.]

if my irate landlady has not been dreaming, too, and received her rent. I'll see."

He went downstairs, and when in the worthy matron's presence said, with an air of great dignity :

"Madame, I wish to speak to you about the rent of my room."

"Yes, sir, yes, you are very kind," said the heretofore stern lady, bowing profusely, "but your agent paid me last night. Really, sir, I never imagined—"

She stopped short, not knowing yet just what to imagine. But Mr. Gunner was as much in the dark as herself, and left her still unenlightened. In the street he took time to gasp :

"Well, this is a most extraordinary dream! I'll see if it has extended to the restaurant man."

Arrived at his favourite restaurant, he demanded his breakfast as coolly as though his dinner had not been refused him there the day before. It was furnished with great alacrity. Evidently the proprietor had been dreaming, also. Samuel thought he could risk asking what his bill had grown to be in all his long intercourse here.

"Sir, I believe I have a small account here," he said, selecting a toothpick.

"No, sir, no; your agent called here last evening and settled that. I hope you were served satisfactorily, sir."

Mr. Gunner replied in the affirmative, and strolled out. This time he smiled instead of gasping.

"Next thing is to try Slinker & Brother," he soliloquised, tearing a leaf from his note-book, and writing out a cheque. "Let me see," he mused; "what shall be the figure? My self-possession won't stand before more than a few pounds. Well, I'll compromise it at a hundred," he concluded, jotting down the figures.

It must be confessed he had some doubts as to the result as he presented this paper to the cashier, but he assumed a nonchalant air, and appeared to be very much interested in something out in the street, while the cashier rapidly cast his eye over the contents, and then glanced keenly at him.

He begged Mr. Gunner to excuse him a moment, and then consulted with an old gentleman whom Samuel thought must be Mr. Slinker himself; after which he came back, and with polite excuses for the delay, began to tell out the money.

Mr. Gunner took it in dignified silence, and departed. What had happened? Had he awakened from that brief nap in his garret in that wonderful land depicted in the Arabian Nights, or had some rich old uncle died and left him a fortune?

Mr. Gunner would fain have believed this latter supposition, but for the melancholy fact that he had no rich uncle nor relative of any sort. Even had it been so, why all this secrecy? He owned that he was puzzled.

Before night he had ascertained that all his debts had been paid by the same mysterious

agency, and that his former creditors held a very high opinion of him.

"Really, I am not bad-looking," he pondered, surveying himself in the full-length mirror, as established in an excellent hotel, he had retired to his apartment for the night. "Pon my honour," affecting to drawl a little, and twirling his moustache, "a very high-bred face that. Symmetrical form, elegantly arrayed. Samuel Gunner, this is a most pleasant trance you have fallen into."

He threw himself on a sofa, and looked intently at the chandelier—a bona-fide chandelier this time, and no tallow candle to be dignified into one by the young gentleman's droll vagaries.

"Miss Viola Colhill," he mused, rather irrelevantly. "Oh, Tillah, I am afraid the memory of your queenly form and coy, sweet glance, will fade into oblivion when this new star arises on the stage of my existence. Alas! such is life."

After this consoling bit of philosophy, Mr. Gunner's feelings seemed to be relieved, and he prepared to retire.

Miss Viola Colhill was entertaining callers. This young lady, being motherless, presided over her father's establishment, and to do anything was, with Miss Colhill, to do it in style. Her taste was something wonderful, it was said; but as her desires always lay in the direction of something costly, it had been developed at a great expense to her indulgent parent.

Miss Viola was very stylish. Anything to be fashionable had only to be worn by her. Any saying to become popular had only to be repeated by Miss Colhill. She was a great authority among the fashionables, and yet was not a belle.

Not but that she was handsome enough and wealthy enough to have reigned as one; but it was a self-evident fact that Miss Colhill, despite the fortune in her own right, and her father's wealth looming up behind it, had only an average amount of lovers, and still remained only a haughty, impassive girl.

"You are cold-hearted, Viola," a friend said to her once.

"Oh, no! not cold-hearted," replied she, languidly; "but the men are so stupid! Really I can't imagine what you girls see in them to admire and love. The few I know are positively ridiculous."

"That is because you are not interested in them, and show it so plainly by your coldness that they cannot be otherwise than stupid in your presence. However, I'll not despair of you yet. You are only twenty, and there is plenty of time for the right man to come along yet."

"The right man!" repeated Viola. "I am afraid there are no more right men nowadays. Such a puny set of creatures! Ay, why did I not live in those grand old days of chivalrous manhood and romance?"

"Oh! it is well enough for you to talk so now, miss," said her friend, laughing, "but wait till Love, the king, enters your heart. Cupid is capricious, and I'll wager the object of your fastidious affections will be on a par with the rest of mankind."

"Perhaps so," assented Viola, indifferently. "I often warn me that Cupid will become impotent, and pierce my heart in the person of a tramp."

They both laughed over this, but after her friend was gone Viola wondered if it would be possible for her to fall in love. However, after the wayward manner of story-tellers, we have wandered from the subject and taken the much enduring reader with us.

We began by saying Miss Colhill was entertaining callers. These ladies she had taken into the conservatory to examine a plant she had lately purchased. They were ecstatic over its tropical luxuriance and delicate aroma.

"Ah! Miss Colhill, what taste you have," sighed one.

Miss Colhill bowed her thanks rather indifferently.

"What an expense your wonderful ability to beautify must be to your father, my dear," murmured Mrs. Field, who, on the strength of her relationship, never lost an opportunity of reminding her niece of her extravagance.

"Oh, Viola can afford to be extravagant!" laughed the friend with whom she had held the conversation recorded above. "She means to capture the catch of the season. Do you not, dear?" with an expressive nod meant to inform her she had reference to the tramp before spoken of.

Viola slightly shrugged her shoulders.

"Who is the catch this season?" asked someone.

"Why, don't you know?" cried a young lady of the gushing order. "But then of course you do not. He is so exclusive as yet—has never appeared in our circle but a few times."

"Who is he?"

"Mr. Gunner. He will undoubtedly be the greatest catch. Scatters his money as though it were sand. He must be immensely rich."

"Papa says it is not best to trust such characters," ventured one prudent girl.

"Perhaps not always," assented the other; "but everyone knows Mr. Gunner's means are genuine."

After this Viola heard a great deal of Mr. Gunner, who seemed to be making good progress in the fashionable world; but as she did not go out so often as some handsome heiresses would have done, she did not see him herself for some time.

However, one night at the opera a young man was ushered into her box by an old acquaintance, and introduced as Mr. Gunner.

"Can this be the Mr. Gunner?" thought Viola, noting him with more attention than she usually bestowed on gentlemen. "I am afraid he is not the one to cause me to change my opinion of men," she said to herself.

Certainly the gentleman did not appear very brilliant; but then what was there to be brilliant about, after, and with a new acquaintance, beside?

But these more generous thoughts did not enter her mind until he had left her, and was in his own place again. Then she turned her glass upon him, and concluded that he was at least as entertaining as the majority of her acquaintances.

"Perhaps my friend was right," she said, "and I am so cold and indifferent myself that they cannot be entertaining in my company."

This thought gave food for reflection, and by the time she found herself in her carriage, and on the way home, she had almost concluded to change her habit of repelling all advances toward friendship, and try to get up an interest in her fellow-beings.

"This life is short and miserable enough," she reflected, "without one living for ever in one's own reflections and opinions. Why not seek companionship in our fellow-beings? The Creator formed us for friends and companions; then why seek to change His laws?"

Finally, by this course of reasoning, Miss Colhill persuaded herself that she had grown to be quite a hermit, and resolved to change her course immediately, ere it led to serious consequences. Her first step, she concluded, would be to be very gracious to Mr. Gunner. That gentleman, all unconscious of her new resolutions, was drooping at home on his sofa, very disconsolate.

"It's a hopeless case," he sighed. "I heard she was cold and indifferent, but the sight of her has chilled my blood."

However, despite the chilling process his blood had undergone, he was very active in finding what church she attended, what balls she was likely to go to, in what direction she generally drove, etc., and made it his object to meet her on every occasion possible.

One day she passed him in her carriage, and actually bowed and smiled bewitchingly, which performance caused some internal organ (we will not presume to say what) to make quite a com-

motion inside his waistcoat; and that night, as he lay on his sofa, instead of looking at his chandelier as usual, he closed his eyes and saw two rows of pearls flash between smiling lips, and a pair of dark, animated eyes look into his.

The next time he saw her was at a ball. The pearls flashed forth once more, and Samuel was happy. They danced together. Oh, mysterious organ, how you did behave every time her white hand was folded in his or their eyes met. Indeed, when they waltzed the feeling grew so violent Mr. Gunner was sure it would end in heart disease.

Viola was chaperoned by her aunt, Mrs. Field, who soon grew sleepy and bore her off. Samuel escorted her to her carriage and handed her in, being rewarded by permission to call.

He watched the carriage until it was wheeled out of sight, quite unconscious that the same pair of eyes which had wrought heart disease in so short a time were peeping from between the curtains, in quite an undignified way, to catch a last glimpse of him as he stood in the blaze of light with his head uncovered.

"Why, men are not so stupid, after all," thought the owner of those eyes, "when one exerts one's self to take an interest in them; at least, this one is not. He looked quite handsome just now, when he bowed and the wind blew his hair from his forehead—"

But here these thoughts stopped abruptly, and she sat up very straight, feeling thankful that Aunt Field was sleepy, for she felt that she blushed very red.

"And no wonder," she thought, "after thinking such things of man. What would he think of me if he knew?"

But "he" did not know, and went back to the ball-room feeling very angry with Mrs. Field, and wondered why the gay scene, so bright and joyous to him but a moment ago, seemed so dull and empty now. The dainty, fitting forms about him only inspired him with a feeling of disgust, and the gossips were not long in whispering the cause of the lion's distraught manner and early departure.

Samuel did not lie on the sofa that night and think of Viola's eyes. He paced up and down his apartment and said to himself:

"I will win her!"

Then followed a long series of balls, *soirées*, operas, etc., in all of which Samuel and Viola figured largely. Mr. Gunner's heart disease developed rapidly, and being of a new and malignant type which is contagious, soon communicated itself to Viola, much to her dismay and disapproval. But once contracted it clung to her until she was obliged to admit that she was in love with Samuel Gunner.

Who was he? She often asked herself this question, but without result. No one knew from whence he sprang, or how he came to possess the money he scattered so profusely around. He was evidently a spendthrift, and rumour sometimes whispered, dissipated. Yet she loved him.

Viola Colhill, the patrician daughter of the wealthy Charles Colhill—she who had held herself aloof from many highly respected and noble men—had succumbed at last to one who was perhaps an adventurer.

"This all comes of changing one's habits, and being agreeable to people," she said poutingly to herself, for you see the heart disease had made her somewhat girlish in her softer moods. "If I had never allowed myself to become intimate with him I would still have been gay and heart free. As it is, I cannot banish him from my thoughts. He visits all my dreams, and I blush like a school-girl if he approaches me. Oh, Viola Colhill, what a simpleton you have grown."

But despite the numerous scoldings she gave herself on this score, she felt that it was pleasant to love and be loved, for she felt that he returned her regard, and, despite the wicked names she persisted in calling him, her whole faith and confidence had gone out with her heart, and she believed him good and true.

She felt that the change which had taken place in her nature was for the better. She loved

people and things she had held in supreme contempt before, and everything seemed bright and enjoyable which but a short time ago had been dull and insipid.

Mr. Colhill was at a loss to account for the change which had taken place in his stately daughter, but was none the less pleased to see her gay and happy.

However, the time came when he was enlightened. Two shame-faced young people crept into the library to ask his blessing on their union.

Great was his surprise and displeasure at first; but on becoming convinced that his daughter's happiness depended on his decision, he gave a free consent.

Then they were happy, and the days glided swiftly by like pleasant dreams, wafting them on to that nearer union. The wedding day was resplendent, and the élite thronged to see the interesting couple united. After the usual ceremonies congratulations and farewells, they prepared to depart on their tour, as this was the programme.

Then it was that the happy bridegroom remembered he had neglected to draw the necessary funds to defray his expenses abroad. He left his bride and her father taking a farewell interview in the cool, shadow drawing-room and hastened to Slinker & Brother, where he demanded a considerable sum. The cashier, instead of counting out the money as usual, stared at him superciliously. Mr. Gunner returned the stare with interest.

"What d'ye mean?" drawled the man. "You have no account here."

Samuel blushed furiously at this unlooked-for insolence, and was meditating violent measures, when the old gentleman came forward and said suavely:

"Sir, we are commissioned to inform you that the sum placed here at your disposal is exhausted, and no more forthcoming."

Had the heavens fallen? Samuel turned sick at heart.

"What—who is the man who has been furnishing me with money?"

"Sir, we are not authorised to inform you."

Had he been dealing with the cashier then, Mr. Gunner would have collared him and demanded the name instantly. As it was, he turned abruptly, and went out into the street.

"Good heavens! what have I done?" he cried in his heart. "Am I once more a beggar, and have I bound Viola—my patrician darling—down to share my lot? Oh, weak, miserable fool that I have been not to see this snare! I have been a tool, and gone on using another man's money without thinking or caring whence it came. Now I have my reward. Can I ever meet Viola, or tell her of my folly? Can I bear to see her smile change from the warmest welcome to cold surprise and contempt, when she hears of my villainy?"

He started abruptly away, but a hand was laid on his arm, and someone walked beside him. He turned and looked. Could it be? Yes, it was his "agent"—the cause of his present grief and deep misfortune. He was smiling grimly.

"Well?" said Samuel, interrogatively.

"So you are married, are you?" said the other, with sardonic satisfaction.

"What is that to you, sir?" said Samuel, fiercely, releasing his arm.

The man laughed shortly and said:

"Come with me, and I'll show you."

He followed mechanically down the familiar streets, and to the very door of Viola's home. His companion rang the bell sharply, and when the door was opened, walked in abruptly without a word. The servant, seeing Mr. Gunner, was silent.

"Where are they?" demanded the stranger, fiercely.

Samuel led the way to the drawing-room, but stopped at the door. His companion pushed it rudely open, and they both entered. Viola was sitting beside her father with her head on his shoulder, while he smoothed her hair tenderly. They started as the two entered, and a glad light leaped into Viola's eyes at the sight of her husband; but when the stern, dark man with

him stepped forward, she shrank back with a faint scream.

His presence acted like magic on Mr. Colhill. He sprang to his feet with clenched hands and distorted features, and cried:

"Edward Hamlin, you here? Leave this house instantly! No breath of yours shall contaminate my daughter! You are not worthy to step under the same roof with her!"

"Since when?" inquired Edward Hamlin, calmly. "Since she married you beggar?" And he pointed to the pale and downcast Samuel.

"How dare you, sir?" cried Viola; and, running to her husband's side, she caught his hand.

"Ah, heavens! It is all true!" he said, turning away.

"Yes, Mrs. Gunner, you have married next thing to a beggar! Your husband is an adventurer. Shall I unfold the tale?"

"No! It is false!" cried Viola. "False as your own wicked heart!"

"Listen," said Samuel, "and believe all; but remember I love you;" and he sank down in a chair, and buried his head in his arms on a table.

"I will explain," began the stranger, "for the benefit of Mr. Gunner, "that a feud has existed between mine and Charles Colhill's family ever since long before either of us existed; so we have, naturally, always been enemies. As boys, at home, we threw stones at each other. At school and college we were rivals, and as men we were still enemies. I took morbid satisfaction in worrying and defeating him, and I am sure he enjoyed my defeats quite as much. Our paths crossed at every turn. Even in love we were separated for years; but finally, coming back to this city, I found his wife was dead and he had one daughter. Instantly I resolved to take revenge on the father by winning the daughter to love me, if that were possible, (and stranger things had happened) and then deserting her. I made a long siege of it, transforming myself as much as possible into the modern lover, meeting her at every place where her father would not be, and under an assumed name. You know yourself all the arts of a lover. I practised everything and failed. At last she became weary of my repeated proposals and pleadings, and one day while I was here—in this very room—she called her father to her aid, and he forbade me ever addressing his daughter again. You may easily imagine this episode did not lessen my hatred of Colhill, or my determination to injure him. 'If I cannot win the girl myself, someone else shall, and for the same purpose,' was my next resolution. In accordance with this, I began to watch the idle vagabonds about town to select for Miss Viola a husband. I made two or three trials, selecting from this class, and giving the fellows instructions and means to carry them out; but it is needless to say they all failed. The young lady was not to be won by any such wretched creatures. Her cultivated taste and innate refinement shrank from contact with anything coarse. However, I thought to make one more trial, and, coming across Mr. Gunner at this time, concluded he was the man I wanted. It took no very careful observation to sum up his merits. Poverty-stricken, idle, a little dissipated, and scattering the little money he possessed with perfect recklessness. To counterbalance this he had the advantages of good-breeding and education. He was neither coarse nor repulsive, and, with the advantages of wealth and position, might easily win a lady's heart. These advantages I resolved to give him, though I divined that I must proceed with caution, for the young man was not really bad, though, with the means, might become something worse than a spendthrift. In short, I commissioned my bankers to furnish him with any sum of money he demanded, paid all his debts, and then informed him his prospects were changed, and that he was henceforth to live in ease; only calling on Slinker and Brother for funds. I also mentioned that it was desirable he should make Miss Colhill's acquaintance with a view to matrimony. I limited my conversation to as small a space as possible, and answered no questions. Since then I have kept out of his way, watching all his actions,

however. I knew not what his idea of his sudden good fortune was, nor do I care. Certain it is, he took the hate, and you know the rest. Sir, I congratulate you on your son-in-law. I know you want to thank me for securing him for you, but we will postpone that. Mrs. Gunner, I wish you joy. Your husband, I dare say, is no worse than the majority of young men, though I must say he has worked quite a cavity in my fortune. However, you have only to hold the purse-strings a little closer, and you will get along charmingly."

He bowed very low, smiled mockingly, and left the room. Samuel still sat with his head bowed on the table motionless. He dared not look at Viola, feeling how weakly he had acted, and yet he knew it devolved on him to speak. He rose slowly, and turned his eyes to her erect, motionless form, and proud, troubled face.

"What can I say?" he began, his voice trembling, and his lips growing pale as he spoke. "I cannot deny that I have been idle, thoughtless and miserably poor. I have used another man's money without a thought of the consequences, and been a tool used to wrong one dearer to me than life. Oh, Viola, do not scorn me, for through it all I have loved you! Only believe that, and this punishment will not be so hard to bear. See, I will not approach you, touch you, or take your name upon my lips again, until I can prove that I am honourable in this, at least. Nay, do not speak now, even were it to say you forgive me, but wait until I come again, with my character redeemed by actions instead of words."

He left her hastily, resolved to begin a new and worthier life, which would, in the end, bring him to her again.

Far down an obscure street, and up an obscure staircase, was the office of Mr. Samuel Gunner, attorney-at-law. This was what many months of toil, hardships and perseverance had brought him to—a small, dusty office, full of musty books, and a dark, bare apartment in a dirty lodging-house.

No clients, no money, no friends. Oh, empty dreams of youth! How near had seemed that goal for which he was aiming when he began the battle! Position, reputation and wealth, which, in the end, meant Viola and happiness, had all seemed, in anticipation, easily obtained; but now, after years of hard study and diligent labour, the goal was far, far distant yet.

Mr. Gunner sat in his office, thinking of this, one gloomy day, when there came a knock at the door. This was so unusual an occurrence that the young lawyer almost upset his chair in his haste to admit the possible client.

The client, if client he was, promised to be of some consequence, for he was well dressed, and appeared to have some opinion of his own importance.

"Do I address Samuel Gunner?"

"Yes, sir, that is my name," replied Samuel, his thoughts reverting to that memorable night when another stranger, as unexpected as this, had asked him the same question.

"I am happy to know you, Mr. Gunner," said the stranger, presenting his card, "and happy to be the bearer of good news."

Samuel looked at the card, somewhat confused.

What good fortune could come to him?

"I will not keep you in suspense," continued his visitor. "You have fallen heir to a large inheritance, and I am here, by order of the deceased, to inform you of this, and deliver this document into your hands."

He placed a sealed envelope in the bewildered Mr. Gunner's hand, and then, after arranging another meeting, and a few more words of explanation, left him. Samuel slowly broke the seal and, after looking at the signature—Edward Hamlin—perused it.

"SAMUEL GUNNER—Sir: I once gave you command of a part of my fortune, to further certain wicked plans, and greatly injured you, and another as innocent in the affair as yourself, because of my hatred of a third. I hear that third party is now dead, and they tell me I am dying also. As I think of the long, useless years

I have wasted, and look back over their dreary expanse, I see not one good or noble deed to brighten their dark track. Then, as my mind reverts to the great, mysterious future near at hand, my heart tells me to do one generous thing before I die. I have no children, no friends, and few relatives, and I now humbly ask you to accept the fortune which once caused you so much trouble. When you read this I shall be dead. Then let me repair this one wrong I have done while there is time. EDWARD HAMLIN."

So good fortune had come at last! He saw himself established among the wealthy professional men of the city, with all those long-wished-for friends and clients at hand, and everything needed to secure him position and reputation. Then—what then?

Viola sat at the piano, softly touching the keys, her pale, saddened face turned towards the window, through which the last rosy gleams of day fell slantingly, while the gentle, sweet-laden breeze crept through the open casement, and faintly stirred the soft hair on her brow. The dark eyes grew shadowy with thought, and the slender fingers began calling forth sweet, solemn strains from the instrument. It had been long years since she had looked upon him—the only one she had ever loved; and now, as ever, her heart hungered for his presence.

Since her father's death she had lived in seclusion in this solitary nook, and the years had glided by peacefully. She reviewed these years now, and mechanically her fingers glided over the keys until the last bright sunbeams faded from the wall, and the shadows fell thickly around her.

Suddenly she was aware that someone had entered the room—someone whose presence filled her with vague happiness. She wheeled round from the piano, her hands locked tightly. He had said, "Wait till I come again," and now he had come!

"Viola, dare I hope you love me yet?"

He held his arms open and she glided into them.

"Oh, my darling, I have always loved and trusted you! Do not leave me again!"

"Never again, my own, through life!"

E. E.

FACETIA.

NOT SURPRISING.

THAT the Beaconsfield "Wreath" should result in a chap—"let in." —Funny Folks.

THE PERFECTION OF TRAINING.

CIRCUS CLOWN: "Hi! hi! Here you see the wonderful, docile, and highly-trained pony, with which I can do anything—(pony rears and knocks off clown's hat)—that it chooses."

—Funny Folks.

CRUSHING PROSPECT.

CLARA (to friend who is arranging for a carpet-dance): "Why not ask the nice American we met at the Sinclairs?"

JULIA: "What! The man with the big feet?"

CLARA: "Yes."

JULIA: "Gracious, Clara! Fancy those feet in my poor little room! They would 'dance all the quadrille'!"

—Funny Folks.

HONOURS THICK UPON HIM.

DOCTOR: "The old story, working hard, passed several examinations, I see. What are all these letters after your name, M.A.N.C.O.O.S. and F.R.W.S.?"

PATIENT: "Those? Oh, Member of the Army and Navy Co-Operative Stores and Fellow of the Royal Westminster Aquarium!"

—Funny Folks.

THE DAYS OF OLD.

"Ah!" said Adolphus, "in our courting days, when I took leave and went down the steps, she said, 'Bye-bye' so sweetly, and now it's 'Buy, buy'."

"I see," said his friend. "She's cast a different spell over you."

"BOB," said a fashionably dressed man to the servant of one of his companions, "is your master at home?" "Yes, sir," replied the boy, "but he is confined to his room. He's a-growin' his moorstarshes, and ain't allowed to see nobody but his hairdresser."

"PAUL, my jewel," said Pat, "I'm mighty sorry ye can't dine with me to-day." "Arrah, and why can't I dine with ye?" said the astonished Phil. "Because, my dear," returned Pat, "I haven't asked ye as yet."

A DUTCHMAN, being asked how often he shaved, replied: "Dree times a week, effey tay but Sonntay; den I shaves every tay."

A PHYSICIAN who had been in attendance on a patient known as a very hard case, was met one morning by a neighbour as he was coming from the sick man's house, who asked: "How is your patient, Doctor? Is he out of danger?" "Well, no," hesitatingly answered the doctor; "he's dead, but I'm afraid he's far from being out of danger."

JONES PROPOSES.

And the Major pretty soon disposes of Jones.

JONES: "In a word, Major, I love your daughter."

MAJOR: "Which daughter, sir? One is engaged."

JONES: "But—er—the—other—"

MAJOR: "Oh, the other is the one? Good-morning." —Funny Folks.

FORGETTING HERSELF.

AT an evening party a lady was severely commenting upon the character of an absent female acquaintance, of whom she said vehemently that there wasn't such another in the city for everything that was unladylike or unwomanly.

"Shush, my dear!" whispered a friend to her. "You are forgetting yourself."

ONLY A STOCKHOLDER.

Two newsboys were standing in front of a cigar shop when one of them asked the other:

"Have you got a 'apenny?"

"Yes."

"Well, I've got a penny. Give me yours and I'll buy a three-'apenny cigar."

"All right," says No. 2, handing out the coin.

He enters the cigar shop, procures a cigar (on credit, possibly), lights it, and puffs with a great deal of satisfaction.

"Come, now, give us a pull," says No. 2. "I furnished some of the money."

"I know it," said the smoker; "but then I'm president, and you're only a stockholder. I'll smoke, and you can spit."

A DIFFERENCE.

An Irish girl who was in the habit of soaping the dirty clothes before putting them to soak, on being told by her mistress to get a dried codfish and put it to soak for dinner, did so, after rubbing it over smartly with a good quantity of hard soap.

LITTLE Billy was told: "Never ask for anything at the table. Little boys should wait until they are served." The other day little Billy was forgotten in the distribution, and was not served at all. What could he do? Presently, after reflecting seriously, he asked: "Maumma, when little boys starve to death do they go to heaven?"

"WELL, how is the summer trade?" said a gentleman to a friend the other day. "Never brisker," was the reply. "My wife shops all day, every chair in the house is covered with bundles, and I think of sending my pocket-book out of town for a change of air—it's so thin."

THE cruise of the sons of the Prince of Wales in the "Bacchante" will be in the first instance to the West Indies and North America, calling at Halifax long enough to enable the young Princes to visit the Princess Louise.

STATISTICS.

"MANY MICKLES MAKE A MUCKLE."—According to the calculation of Mr. G. T. C. Bartley, an ounce of bread wasted daily in each household in England and Wales is equal to 25,000,000 quartern loaves, the produce of 30,000 acres of wheat, and enough to feast annually 100,000 people. An ounce of meat wasted is equal to 300,000 sheep.

THE REVENUE.—The receipts on account of revenue from 1st April, 1879, when there was a balance of £6,915,756, to June 21, 1879, were £17,516,066, against £17,479,048 in the corresponding period of the preceding financial year, which began with a balance of £6,243,389. The net expenditure was £17,009,005, against £17,315,673 to the same date in the previous year. The Treasury balances on June 21 amounted to £5,917,720, and at the same date in 1878 to £5,954,963.

THE BRIDE'S STORY.

WHEN I was but a country lass, now fifteen years ago,
I lived where flowed the Medway through meadows wide and low;
There first, when skies were bending blue
and blossoms blowing free,
I saw the ragged little boy who went to school with me.

His homespun coat was frayed and worn,
with patches covered o'er;
His hat—ah! such a hat as that was never seen before!
The boys and girls, when he came, they shouted in their glee,
And jeered the little ragged boy who went to school with me.

His father was a labouring man, and mine was highly born;
Our people held both him and his in great contempt and scorn—
They said I should not stoop to own a playmate such as he,
The bright-eyed, ragged little boy who went to school with me.

For years they had forgotten him, but when again we met,
His look, his voice, his gentle ways remained in memory yet;
They saw alone the man of mark, but I could only see
The bright-eyed, ragged little boy who went to school with me.

He had remembered me, it seemed; as I remembered him;
Nor time nor honours in his mind, the cherished past could dim;
Young love had grown to older love; and so to-day, you see,
I wed the little ragged boy who went to school with me. J. C.

GEMS.

TIME has a wonderful power in taking the conceit out of persons. When a young man first emerges from school or college, and enters upon the career of life, it is painfully amusing to witness his self-sufficiency; he would have all the world to understand that he has learnt everything—that he is master of all knowledge, and can unravel mysteries. But as he grows older he grows wiser; he learns that he knows a great deal less than he supposed he did.

THE fountain of content must spring up in the mind, and he who has so little knowledge of human nature as to seek happiness by changing anything but his own disposition, will waste

his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he proposes to remove.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CURE FOR HICCOUGH.—Under this title Dr. Grelle, of Vichy, states that he has never failed in immediately relieving hiccup, i.e. not dependent upon any appreciable morbid condition, by administering a lump of sugar soaked with vinegar.

OIL TO PROMOTE THE GROWTH OF THE HAIR.—Olive-oil one pound, oil of origanum one drachm, oil of rosemary quarter of a drachm; mix.

TO TAKE GREASE OUT OF LEATHER.—Apply the white of an egg to the spot, and dry it in the sun. Repeat the application till the stain is removed.

LOTION FOR THE COMPLEXION.—Blanched bitter almonds two ounces, blanched sweet almonds one ounce; beat to a paste; add distilled water one quart—mix, strain, put into a bottle; add corrosive sublimate in powder, twenty grains dissolved in two table-spoonfuls of spirits of wine; shake well together.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE late Khedive's dinner and breakfast services cost £919,000; and they were purchased while his people were dying of hunger.

TEN thousand pounds is said to be the loss suffered by the Royal Agricultural Society owing to the attentions of Jupiter Pluvius.

The number of offences for which the punishment of death is the penalty in the army is thirty-six, a large proportion of them, of course, trivial, and for which the lash would be found very convenient. The Prime Minister has stated that the "cat" will only be administered in those cases which have come under the extreme penalty.

There is little doubt that the ex-Empress of the French will not permanently reside in England after the funeral of the Prince Imperial, and it is not improbable that she will cease to interest herself actively in the Bonapartist cause in France. A good deal depends on whether Prince Napoleon declares his intentions on the succession question. If he should assert his undoubted right to be the head of the Imperialist party, it is not at all likely that the Empress will bestir herself to assist her old enemy, much less to supply the funds necessary to keep alive his pretensions.

JAMES'S LENTILLA.—The concensus of scientific approval which was evoked some short time since, as the result of analyses of the new form of food, is rapidly receiving valuable justification at the hands of the public, who are often slow in their appreciation of what is new to them. For custards, puddings, omelettes, rissoles, etc., James's Lentilla has proved itself decidedly superior to any of the other farinaceous preparations in the market, many of which are simply starch. The "Food" is extremely nutritious, satisfying, and remarkably easy of digestion, and is, therefore, of inestimable value to invalids, it being, in fact, an adult's not an infant's food. It is no wonder, therefore, that it is now universally sold by chemists and grocers as well as by the original introducers, Messrs. James and Co., Cardington-street, Hampstead-road.

THE Crown Prince of Italy seems to be under a strict military discipline. Recently, while the young Prince was playing with the daughter of the Marquise Montrevo, an altercation arose, he lost his temper, and cried out, "If I were king I would have your head cut off." The King, being told of these words, at once, notwithstanding the intercession of his mother, ordered his son—aged nine years—under arrest, and sentenced him to imprisonment in his own room for a week, cut down his meals, and forbade the payment of military honours to him during that period.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS must in all cases be accompanied with full name and address; they will be replied to under the initials.

CLARA.—There are a great many hair restorers sold; but most of our friends prefer the Balm of Columbia (Oldridge's), which not only prevents the hair turning grey, but is a safeguard against baldness.

HARRY & GEORGE (Newton Abbot).—Send full name and address.

R. W.—Soft water is always preferable for the horse. It should never be given freshly drawn if you can avoid it. Hard water often roughens a horse's coat and produces griping pains. After drawing the water expose it somewhere for a short time.

ALICE.—The father of an illegitimate child is liable to contribute towards its support from the period of birth until it attains the age of sixteen.

BESSIE.—The fee for a marriage before the Registrar amounts to about five shillings. Three weeks' notice is necessary. The Registrar and persons in his office are the witnesses. You must apply to the Registrar of Marriages for the parish in which you reside.

A VOCALIST.—One of Cooper's Effervescent Lozenges, or, as the patentee calls them, "thirst quenchers," is one of the best of the few harmless luxuries to be indulged in this summer weather. One placed in the mouth dissolves with effervescence, relieves the most intense thirst, at the same time obviating the frequent desire for taking fluids.

A CONSTANT READER.—No. 19 is in print. Send two stamps to the publisher, 334, Strand, W.C.

ONE IN NEED.—Hardware, Mrs. Cox, 51, Houndsditch. China and glass, Messrs. Bends & Benjamin, 4, Houndsditch. Messrs. Boaler and Vernon, general factors, 134, Houndsditch.

WILLIAM.—Smoking to persons who have a tendency to pulmonary disease is highly dangerous, but where the lungs are healthy if enjoyed in moderation it does no harm to the general health. To persons of a lymphatic temperament it is even useful.

T.—Ink spots may be removed by oxalic or nitric acid. As a general rule, all spots occasioned by acids may be removed by alkalis, and those caused by alkalis may be removed by acids.

MABEL & AMY.—See reply to "Harry & George."

O. C. H.—A marriage license must be procured from Doctor's Commons. The cost is about £2 10s. One of the contracting parties must have resided for three weeks previous to the ceremony being solemnized in the district to which the church selected belongs. But banns have to be proclaimed for three Sundays in succession in two churches if the betrothed couple live in different parishes.

WILLIAM.—There are many ways of making ink. The principal ingredients are galla, guma, vitriol, and rain-water. An excellent ink suitable for writing with steel pens, which it does not corrode, may be manufactured as follows: Sixty grains of caustic soda, a pint of water, and as much Indian ink as is required for producing a proper blackness.

P. W., J. W., and J. K., three seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with three good-looking young ladies of medium height.

R. B. and J. S., two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. R. B. is handsome. J. S. is twenty, fair, fond of home and children.

RUBY and CORA, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Ruby is seventeen, medium height, dark. Cora is nineteen, dark, fond of home and children.

HARRIET and AGNES, domestic servants, would like to correspond with two young men. Harriet is twenty-one, fair. Agnes is twenty-four, dark hair. Respondents must be dark, fond of home.

G. L., twenty-one, in a good position, would like to correspond with a good-looking young lady about seventeen.

DARK-EYED NELL and LIVELY SALLY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Dark-Eyed Nell is nineteen, of a loving disposition, fond of home. Lively Sally is twenty-one, light brown hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children. Addresses must be sent.

LOVING ANNIE and LITTLE JENNIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Loving Annie is twenty-eight, medium height, dark, and domesticated. Little Annie is twenty-one, fair, medium height. Respondents must be about the same age, tall, fond of home and children.

HABITUAL, GENERAL, and PUTTY, three marines in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. Habitual is twenty-five, fair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition. General is twenty, fair, good-looking, medium height. Putty is twenty-one, tall, dark, of a loving disposition, and good-looking.

LONDON COCKNEY, a private soldier, would like to correspond with a domestic servant. He is twenty-one, of medium height, fair.

NETTLES PATTY, BOROUGH ISLAND COOK, and DISMOURNING TACKLE, three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. Nettles Patty is twenty-two, good-looking, fair, fond of children. Borough Island School is twenty-one, fair, blue eyes, loving, fond of music. Dismourning Tackle is twenty-one, medium height, good-looking, and of a loving disposition.

MABEL and AMY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Mabel is twenty, medium height, fair, light hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition. Amy is nineteen, tall, fair, light hair, blue eyes. Addresses must be forwarded.

PUTTY, twenty-one, tall, fair, blue eyes, good-tempered, would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty.

THE DOORSTEP.

THE conference meeting through at last,
We boys around the vestry waited
To see the girls come tripping past

Like snow-birds, willing to be mated.

And one she blushed and took my arm;
We let the old folks have the highway,
And started towards the maple farm
Along a kind of lover's by-way.

The grass was soft beneath our feet.
The moon was full, the fields were gleaming;
By hand and tippet sheltered sweet
Her face with youth and health was beaming.

The little hand outside her muff—
Oh, sculptor, if you could but mould it!
So lightly touched my jacket cuff
To keep it warm I had to hold it.

To have her with me there alone
Twas love and fear and triumph blended;
At last we reached the foot-worn stone
Where that precious journey ended.

The old folks, too, were almost home,
Her dimpled hand the latches fingered;
We heard the voices nearer come,
Yet on the doorstep still we lingered.

She shook her ringlets from her head,
And with a "Thank you, Ned," dissembled,
But yet I know she understood
With what a daring wish I trembled.

A cloud passed kindly overhead,
The moon was slyly peering through it,
Yet hid its face, as if it said,
"Come, now or never! do it! do it!"

My lips till then had only known
The kiss of mother and of sister;
But somehow full upon her own
Sweet, rosy, darling mouth I kissed her.

Perhaps 'twas boyish love, yet still,
Oh, listless woman, weary lover!
To feel once more that fresh, wild thrill
I'd give—but who can live youth over? G. B. C.

PHONOGRAPH and MICROPHONE, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Phonograph is twenty-two, tall, dark hair and eyes, fond of children. Microphone is twenty-one, curly hair, hazel eyes, dark, medium height, fond of dancing.

MARY ELLEN, nineteen, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of home, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-one, tall, dark, loving, fond of home and children.

FLYING JIB, JIB, and STAYSAIL, three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies. Flying Jib is dark, curly hair, dark blue eyes, of a loving disposition. Jib is tall, dark eyes, fond of children. Staysail is good-looking, dark, curly hair, blue eyes, fond of dancing and music.

AGATHA and LURLINE, two friends, wish to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Agatha is tall, fair, of a loving disposition, fond of home. Lurline is tall, good-looking, fair, loving. Respondents must be between twenty and twenty-five, fair, and good-looking.

JACK FLYAWAY and IMPREGNABLE, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Jack Flyaway is twenty-two, dark brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of children. Impregnable is twenty-three, medium height, blue eyes.

ANTEDILUVIAN and ANTENDILUVIAN, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Antediluvian is twenty-one, good-tempered, fond of music. Antediluvian is twenty-four, fond of home, good-tempered. Respondents must be between twenty and twenty-three, fond of home and music.

SARAH and ROSE, sisters, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Sarah is tall, fair, dark brown hair, hazel eyes. Rose is twenty-four, good-looking, dark, medium height, loving, blue eyes.

SARAH B., thirty, would like to correspond with a dark young man about the same age with a view to matrimony.

HEAD CAPTAIN and JOLLY JACK, two seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with two young ladies. Head Captain is twenty, dark, medium height, of a loving disposition, fond of music. Jolly Jack is twenty-two, medium height, fair, good-looking, and fond of music and dancing.

ARTHUR, twenty-five, tall, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady possessed of means with a view to matrimony. A young widow without children not objected to.

MARY W., twenty, good-looking, lady-like, brown hair, blue eyes, medium height, would like to correspond with a gentleman about thirty. Respondent must be loving, tall, fond of music.

COPPER TOP, STEPQUICK, COMMON SHELL, and JEW'S HARP, four seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with four young ladies. Copper Top is twenty-one, medium height, of a loving disposition, and fond of music and dancing. Stepquick is twenty, fond of children. Common Shell and Jew's Harp (no descriptions sent).

SUGARBAR, thirty-four, a widower, with one son, would like to correspond with an affectionate young lady about twenty-five, fond of music.

H. A., twenty-five, dark, medium height, in a good position (professor of music), would like to correspond with a young lady about the same age.

FLYING JIB DOWNSHAUL, DOLPHIN STRIKER, and JEWEL BLOCK, three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. Flying Jib Downhaul is twenty-one, brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of music. Dolphin Striker is twenty, dark hair and eyes, fond of children. Jewel Block is twenty-two, curly hair, hazel eyes, and of a loving disposition.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

TRIXIE is responded to by—Herbert, nineteen, dark, hazel eyes, fond of music.

HETTY by—Happy-go-Lucky, twenty-five, dark, medium height, loving, fond of home.

LILLIAS by—Purser's Dip, twenty-two, medium height, fair, fond of children.

BEATRICE by—Lonely Charlie, twenty-one, tall, dark, good-looking.

GUST's address required by—Kate L.

STRONGBACK by—Lizzie, twenty-two, loving, dark hair, blue eyes, medium height.

TROOPER by—Annie, twenty, medium height, fair, of a loving disposition.

ALFRED by—Annie is twenty-one, fair, fond of home and music, thoroughly domesticated; and by—Nellie N., thoroughly domesticated, dark, brown hair, blue eyes, medium height.

HARRY by—Clara, twenty, tall, fair, dark hair and eyes, fond of home and children.

BUNNY by—E. H. A., twenty, medium height, grey eyes, fond of home and children; and by—Herbert, nineteen, medium height, fair.

F. B. by—Harriet, eighteen, dark, blue eyes, medium height.

A. P. by—Eliza, eighteen, fair, blue eyes.

DAISY by—Harry (see first column), eighteen, dark, of a loving disposition.

VIOLET by—Herbert A., dark, fond of home and music, loving; and by—George (see first column), eighteen, loving, fond of home and music.

SAMUEL's full address required by—Nettie N.

TOPGALLANT FUNNEL by—Laura, eighteen, dark hair and eyes.

ROYAL STAY by—Ada, nineteen, medium height, light hair and eyes.

NELLIE by—Alfred, twenty, medium height, fair.

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